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DIVINE EMBLEMS
IN THE
BOOK OF GENESIS.

By Rev. A. B. SIMPSON.



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DIVINE EMBLEMS

IN

THE BOOK OF GENESIS.

By

Rev. A. B. SIMPSON.



PUBLISHED BY
WORD, WORK AND WORLD PUB. CO.,
MADISON AVENUE & 45TH STREET,
NEW YORK.

1888.

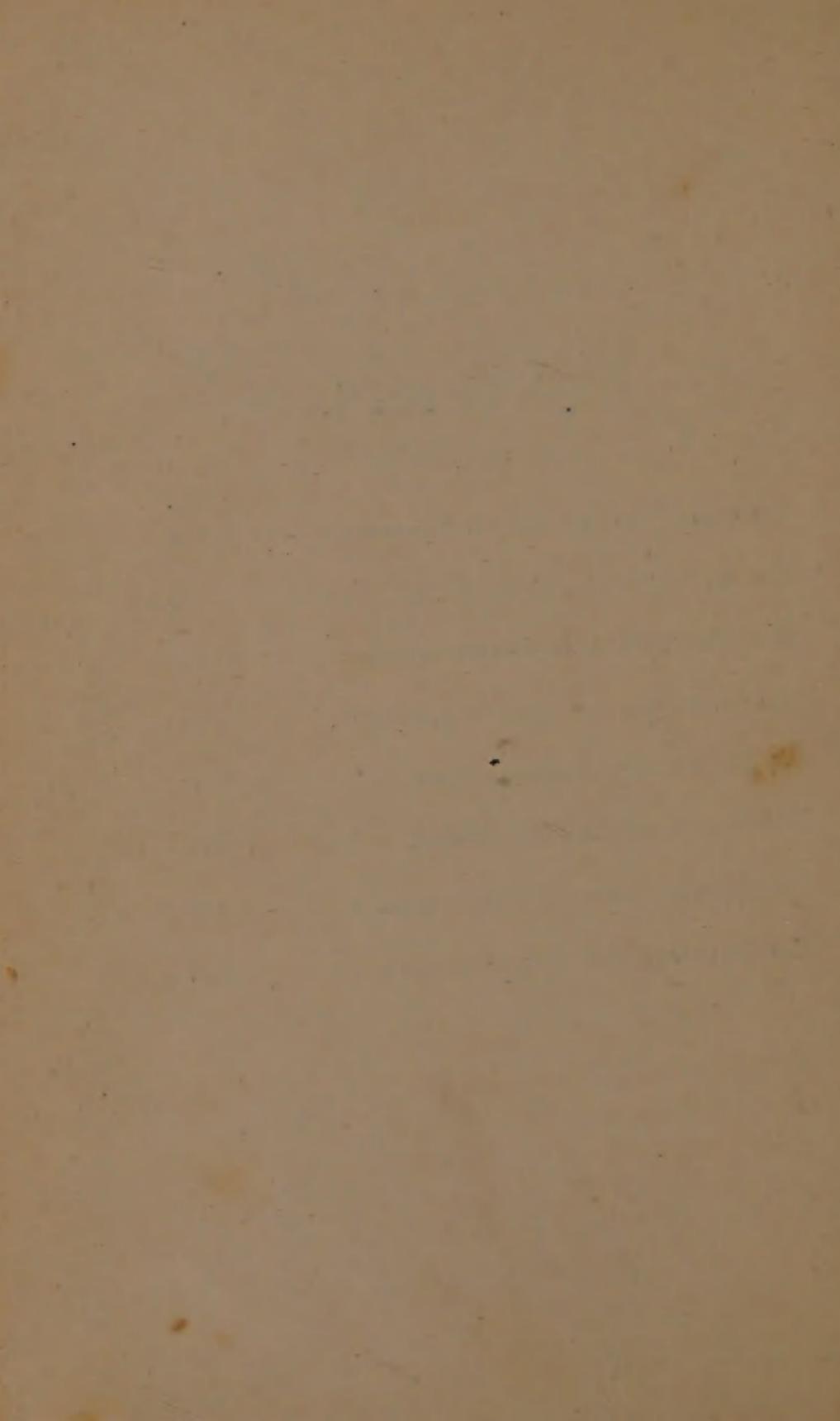
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DIVINE EMBLEMS

— OF —

SPIRITUAL LIFE AND TRUTH.

EMBLEMS FROM THE STORY OF CREATION.

WHILE the Holy Scriptures are a literal and historical record of things that have actually occurred, yet underlying the narrative there is for us a deeper spiritual meaning, which it is the province of faith, under the teaching of the Holy Ghost, reverently to interpret and apply. While there is danger of excess and extravagance in this direction, yet this must not drive us to the opposite extreme of hard and cold literalism. The Holy Scriptures have given us the true principle of such spiritual interpretation, and there we learn both by divine statement and innumerable examples

that "All these things were types, and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." These underlying spiritual teachings are not confined to those things which may be strictly termed types, but in a measure are linked with all the events of the sacred record.

In the following addresses and reflections we shall not attempt to elaborate any rigid or complete system of typology, but shall with simplicity and freedom, endeavor to draw the most practical and spiritual lessons which the Divine Spirit may enable us from the leading types and events of the inspired record—which have more or less precisely a symbolical character and scriptural suggestiveness. \times

SECTION I.—*The Creation.*

The first is the story of the creation. Recognizing, of course, the literal and historical reality of the record, we have the authority of the scriptures themselves to regard it as the figure of the new creation, which the Divine Spirit is working out in the hearts of God's

people, and ultimately will consummate in the Kingdom of Glory. "For weare his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." The first chapter of Genesis is repeated in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Underlying the whole record of the first creation we can trace the story of grace in figure and spiritual foreshadowing. Like that ancient process the new creation begins in wreck and chaos—a wreck, like that, of primeval order. The new creation like the old emerges from a scene of darkness and desolation. Like that, also, it is preceded and introduced by the overshadowing presence and brooding wings of the heavenly Dove, and brought about by the power of the personal and Almighty Word. Then also, the first type of Christ in both creations is the dawning Light. "For God who commanded the

light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Light is followed by Order and the separation of the things that differ, and this word separation is almost a keynote of the entire spiritual life, and has a radical reference to the principle of sanctification itself.

In the old creation there is much light before the celestial luminaries appear in the firmament. This is not until the fourth day. So in the spiritual life the manifestation of Jesus in His personal indwelling and glory, comes often at a later stage, and perhaps the three days that preceded it in the creation narrative suggest, if they do not typify, the resurrection experience which must ever precede it. Salvation brings us the light of the Holy Spirit, but our deeper consecration and union with Him introduces us to the full glory of the Sun of Righteousness, and to the dawn of that day whose "Sun shall no more go down—but the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." This is followed in the old creation by the introduc-

tion, in all its wonderful forms and fullness, of Life in the entire animal kingdom; and so in the new creation the revelation of the indwelling Christ quickens into life the whole spiritual being, and fills it in every part with fruitfulness and fullness of life, until it reaches its climax in the new man in his full maturity reflecting the glorious image of God Himself.

In both the old creation and the new there were successive stages with marked intervals like the great strata of our globe, bearing the traces of intense convulsions and mighty upheavals; so, with the transformation in our spiritual life, God has to break us off from the old experiences, and bring us out into new aspirations and higher planes by forces often as convulsive as those which moulded earth's earlier ages.

And in each case it will be noticed in the records of Genesis, the progress is from the lower to the higher, from the darker to the brighter, from the "evening to the morning."

Every new stage begins in comparative evening and ends in a clear morning, and it is as

true now as in the creation days, "*It was evening and it was morning, one day.*" So the transformation is going forward in every Christian heart, and "*the path of the just is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*" So too, the kingdom of God is going forward through the ages of time, and bye and bye "*it will be evening and morning,*" one eternal day. "*And he that sitteth on the throne shall say, behold I make all things new.*"

SECTION II.—*The Creation of Man.*

The crown of the first creation was man himself. The story of his formation is accompanied with greater emphasis and fullness of detail than the entire universe. It is determined in the counsels of the Eternal Trinity, "*Let us make man,*" and it is patterned after nothing less than the Creator Himself, "*in our image and in our likeness.*" It is fitting that such a majestic being should be the sovereign of the lower creation, and therefore He is invested with the lordship of nature, "*dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air,*

and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." It is natural, therefore, that if the material creation is symbolical of redemption, much more is the creation of man the type of the Holy Spirit's chief work of grace, namely the renewal and restoration of the human soul. Hence, we find in the New Testament epistles such language as this : "Put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" "Put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him;" "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creation : old things have passed away, behold all things have become new."

As before, so here we find many exquisite points of correspondence and resemblance. The natural man was created by the forming hand and breathing breath of his Maker, so the spiritual man is not only externally reformed, but internally renewed and regenerated by the very breath and Spirit of the living God. "The Lord God breathed into man the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The

Holy Ghost breathest into us the spirit of life, and the new man becomes a quickened spirit. So it is written, "The first man Adam was made a living soul, and the last Adam was made a quickening spirit," "and as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Again, the first man was created in the likeness of God, so the new creation reaches forward to this glorious ideal, namely: "to be conformed to the image of His Son," "for both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren;" for, "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Further, the old creation invested man with kingliness and lordship; so the new creation makes us kings and priests unto God. Its consummation will be reached when in the millennial world we shall reign with Christ over the material earth, and the picture of the eighth Psalm shall be fully fulfilled, that, "He hath put all things under His feet."

Man must first regain his lost dominion in the

kingdom of his own heart, and then he shall receive again the crown of nature and the lordship of creation, when he shall be prepared to administer it with the righteousness and beneficence of a perfect nature, and a divine wisdom, and holiness.

There is a still higher emblem in the creation of man which the Apostle Paul has developed with great power and beauty in two important epistles, namely, those to the Romans and to the Corinthians. That is the relation that Adam sustains to the Lord Jesus Christ as the type of His Headship for redeemed humanity. Adam was created not merely as an isolated individual, but as the father and representative of the entire race, and his fall has involved his entire posterity in its bitter and baneful consequences. In like manner the Lord Jesus, the second Adam, stands not for Himself alone, as an isolated individual, but as the representative of His entire people, for whom His suffering and death are accepted as an atoning sacrifice, a complete expiation, and His holy obedience as their imputed righteousness and the ground of their

complete justification before God. Therefore we read in the passages already referred to, "as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous; as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." "As in Adam all died; even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

The extent of Christ's representation is as universal, in the real principle, as Adam's. Adam's headship and its painful consequences, extend to all his posterity. Christ's headship and its glorious blessings extend to all His spiritual posterity; that is all, and only those who are born of Him. Therefore the whole human race shall not be saved, but the whole Christ race shall; and the new birth is the indispensable condition and the vital link between Christ and His constituents. The true reading of the passage already quoted in 1 Cor., 15, is in beautiful accord with this teaching. "As all who are in Adam die, so all who are in

Christ shall be made alive." The great question therefore, for each one of us, is: have we passed out of the Adam life into the Christ life? Salvation, consequently, is not in any sense a culture or improvement of our natural life, but it is the renunciation and crucifixion, not only of the sin, but of the self. The entire nature must die, and all that shall live forever must be born of Christ, who comes down from heaven through the Holy Ghost into our hearts and lives. Salvation, therefore, is a radical and inexorable death sentence upon the flesh, both in its grosser and higher parts, and a supernatural and divine creation, more wonderful than the birth of the universe, and equivalent to the resurrection of the dead. Stupendous fact! God's mightiest handiwork!! Reader, have you experienced it, and can you say, behold, all things are made new?

SECTION III.—*The Creation of Woman.*

The story of the birth of Eve is more exquisitely beautiful than any dream of ancient poetry or conception of art or imagination. The near-

est approach to it is the celebrated description of Socrates in Greek literature, representing the human form as originally double, facing both ways, and afterwards divided by the gods into the sexes, so that every man and woman forms but a half of his or her former self, and which is constantly searching for its counterpart. But this is clumsy and coarse compared with the sacred idyl of woman's lovely birth, which represents her as originally in the man, and then gently taken out of him while he slept, created into beauty and fitness for his fellowship, and then given back to him as his partner and helpmate for life.

The exquisite signification of this in connection with the human and social relation of man and woman; the tender unity, the perfect equality, the mutual independence, and the sacred affection which should ever link them together, does not belong to our present theme. But its spiritual beauty and teaching are even finer and more wonderful, for we have here the parable of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and His relations to the Church, His heavenly Bride, which really

contains the germ of the entire mystery of redemption.

First, we see Eve in her original creation in Adam ; so the Church was in Christ. Adam was not merely an individual man, but rather man in the general sense, containing in himself in his original formation the woman as well as the man ; so the Lord Jesus was not merely one of the sons of men, but the Son of Man, humanity summed up in one complete personality, containing in himself the germ and substance of all the spiritual lives that are to be born of Him ; therefore we are identified really with Him, and so His life and death, His sufferings and obedience are actually, ours, and for us as well as for Himself.

Secondly, Eve was taken out of Adam while he slept and really formed of his physical substance ; so while Jesus slept in the sepulchre in death, the Church was born out of His substance, and every believer is created anew in Christ Jesus. Our life is part of His very being. "We are partakers of the Divine Nature." Christ is actually "formed" in us, and we are part of His

resurrection life as truly as Eve was of Adam's. We are described as "risen with Christ," and our life is hid with Christ in God. Christ is our life. This is the great mystery of the spiritual life ; it is a miracle of life ; it is not mere life, but Christ life. The Hebrew expression which describes the formation of Eve, is the word "builded," He builded the rib into the woman. How perfectly it describes the whole process of the completion of the body of Christ. The same word is used by the Apostle in describing it : "In Him ye are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." The language of Adam to his partner, "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh," was literally true, but just as strikingly true is it now that "we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones."

Thirdly : Eve was given back to Adam to be his partner and bride, and an helpmate for him. Her very life by its origin and intention was for him, and not for herself; therefore woman by her very constitution is made not for selfishness, but for service and love. She finds

her true destiny in living for man, and losing her life and personality in the one she loves ; so the soul born of Christ belongs to Christ ; so the Church taken out of His life is given back to Him as the bride of His love and partner of His throne. The soul born of God must rise to God and live for God, and every impulse and element of its spiritual life and consecration finds its rest in losing itself in God and living only for His glory. This wonderful truth runs like a bridal wreath all through the Holy Scriptures. We see it not only in the marriage of Eden, but in the wedding of Rebekah, in the love of Jacob and Rachel, in the Song of Solomon, in the vision of Hosea, in the marriage feast of Canaan, in the parable of the Ten Virgins, in the strange figurative language St. Paul has used of Christ and the Church, and finally in the majestic vision of the marriage supper of the Lamb. Not only is it true of the Church as a whole, but it must naturally be just as real in the experience of all who are members of that mystical body. Of each of us, as individuals, He says : "Thy Maker is thy

Husband." "Thou shalt call me Ishi." "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear, forget also thine own people, and thy father's house, so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty, for He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him." "The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body." "We are members of His body, and His flesh, and His bones." Have we learned this holy, tender, ineffable secret of the Lord and of the heart, and within the chambers of His presence has it been true of us :

" Precious, gentle, lovely Jesus,
 Blessed Bridegroom of my heart,
In thy secret inner chambers,
 Thou hast whispered what thou art."

SECTION IV.—*The Sabbath.*

The creation of the world and the family is followed by the appointment of the Sabbath, which, with the home, forms the only relic left to man of Eden. While undoubtedly intended to be literally understood and observed as a day of holy rest, and while the creation Sabbath is really the basis of all subsequent legislation regarding this day, and even the Mosaic insti-

tution was but a re-enactment of the Sabbath of creation, and the words of Christ concerning it look back to the very beginning—while all this is literally true and can never be set aside by the passing away of Judaism, yet below and beyond the natural day and its obligations there lies a deep spiritual symbolism. In the Fourth chapter of Hebrews the Apostle implies that it is designed to be the figure of the deeper spiritual rest into which He would lead his people. The source and nature of this rest are finely expressed by the words suggested by the meaning of the day: “He that hath entered into His rest, hath ceased from his own works as God did from His.” It is the true secret of entering Christ’s rest. Struggling for our own righteousness, striving for our own will, will never bring it. “Come unto me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden” is his cry, “and I will rest you.” When we cease from our attempts to justify ourselves, and accept His righteousness, we have the rest of pardon. When we cease from our attempts to sanctify ourselves, and accept His indwelling life and

holiness, we have the rest of holiness. When we cease from our self-will, and accept His will and take His yoke upon us, we have the peace of God that passeth all understanding. Ever more will it be true :

“I struggled and wrestled to win it,
The blessing that setteth me free,
But when I had ceased from my struggling,
His peace Jesus gave unto me.”

It is very remarkable and beautiful that although afterwards, as a time of measure, until Christ's resurrection, the Sabbath was the seventh day of the week, yet actually it was the first day of Adam's life. The first sun that ever rose on his vision was the Sabbath's sun, because he was created on the evening of the sixth day ; so that Adam's sabbath was in this respect the foreshadowing of the Christian Sabbath. The beautiful teaching of this fact is that we need to begin with rest, and not wait to end with it. We are not fitted for service until we are rested first with God's peace.

Christ will not lay His burden on an overloaded heart any more than a human person would overload a weary beast of burden ; there-

fore the Christian Sabbath begins the week, teaching us that we must enter into rest before we are prepared for any service. The heaven that most people are looking for when they die should come as soon as they begin to live and prepare them for all life's labors and burdens. Therefore our dear Lord has said, "Come unto me" first, and "I will rest you." Then "take my yoke upon you," and "with rested hearts go forth to serve me." Have we entered into His rest—His glorious rest? Have we not only the peace, but the "peace, peace" in which He will keep the heart which is stayed on Him? O, let us listen to the calm voice that comes down to us from that sweet Eden morning, and from that other garden and morning by Joseph's empty tomb, where restlessness and weariness find repose in His rest and all-sufficiency.

Over an English cathedral door, in the Isle of Wight, rests a marble figure of a woman lying with her beautiful head on an open Bible, at the words: "Come unto Me all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is the memorial of a royal princess, who

languished for years in the prison hard by, and at last was found one morning with her lovely head resting on that verse, and the tears still moist upon the page. Her weariness had found its pillow on His breast, So let us rest before the icy hand of death shall still our throbbing pulses, and leaning there on His strength find :

“ His fullness lies around our incompleteness,
Round our restlessness His rest.”

SECTION V.—*The Garden.*

The word *Eden* signifies in the Hebrew, “delight,” and the word *garden* has passed into the term “*Paradise*,” which represents an enclosure of natural beauty and culture, combining exquisiteness of scenery and all the delights of climate and production which natural conditions can secure. It was not intended as a scene of indolence and sensual delight, but as a congenial home, and a scene of occupation and service for a holy and happy race. God always meant his intelligent creatures to be employed, and Heaven will be a scene of active and continual service.

This primeval paradise stands as a symbol of our future home, and is reproduced with higher conditions of felicity and glory in the closing chapter of Revelations, and the vision of the future state of the glorified. That it will be a scene of delight in the physical beauty and perfection of the millennial earth and the new earth and heaven, there can be no question. Not forever will the soil of earth bring forth its piercing thorns and poison plants, rugged rocks and barren wastes. The blood of Calvary has redeemed and brought back an inheritance, infinitely more than Adam lost. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree." "For ye shall yet go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands." Man's highest dream of beauty and God's divine ideal of blessing shall be fully realized, and earth shall smile in all the loveliness of Paradise restored. Let us therefore look upon the picture and hasten its real-

ization by laboring and praying for His coming,
Without Him earth never can become a para-
dise again.

The figure of the garden is strangely linked with all the scenes of redemption. Not only does it recall the happy memories of Eden, and the sad story of the fall, but it was in a garden that the tides of sin and judgment were rolled back by a suffering Redeemer, when with agony unutterable and sweat-like drops of blood He cancelled our sins in Gethsemane, and planted in the garden of our life by those blood-drops the seed of hope and promise. It was in a garden, too, that he was buried and that the seed of His own precious body was planted as a corn of wheat which fell into the ground to die according to His own sublime figure. And it was in a garden that He rose again ; it was forth from the spring blossoms and vernal sunshine of that Easter morning that the seed of promise sprang into immortal life and light, and the hopes of our salvation and glory emerged in the resurrection life of Jesus. The garden of Gethsemane, and the garden of Joseph have undone the wrong of

the garden of the Fall, and opened the gates of Eden and its innocence and happiness again. So the figure of the garden is carried in the rich symbolism of the prophets and poets of the Bible into the region of our spiritual life. "A garden enclosed, an orchard of pomegranates" and precious fruits and heavenly flowers, is the metaphor by which the Master describes his work of grace in the consecrated heart. The graces of the christian life are exhibited under the figure of all the fruits of nature; the care of the husbandman is illustrated by the methods and forms of human culture; and even the rivers of Eden became a suggestion if not a symbol of the streams of grace which make glad the City of God. The crown of the restored earth and the glorified heaven is the last garden of the divine panorama. There all the blessedness shall be more than restored; the river of the water of life shall flow through its midst from the very throne of God and the Lamb; all trees of beauty and fruitfulness shall cover its banks and yield fruit not only according to the seasons of earth, but every month, in a perpetual full-

ness and fruitfulness of life and delight; and there shall be no more curse, nor night, nor death, nor even the occasional visitation of God, for it shall be his personal abode and the metropolis of all creation. The tabernacle of God shall be with men, and earth and heaven shall be the eternal home of Christ and His redeemed, and the scene of a blessedness which our highest thought cannot even conceive.

SECTION VI.—*The Tree of Life.*

This is described in literal terms as one of the actual productions of the garden. It was in the midst of the garden, and perhaps its crowning production and glory. It is evident that it was the means of sustaining and perpetuating the physical life of man, for after the fall it was withdrawn from his reach for the express reason that it was not now fitting with his fallen nature that he should still partake of it and thus live forever. A perpetual physical life in his new condition would not only be contrary to the curse already pronounced, but would itself be a curse to him. It is therefore plain that

even in Eden his physical life was not self-sustaining, but dependent upon supplies from sources beyond himself. Was it not designed thus to teach us that our physical life is not self-constituted, but needs to be divinely sustained? If the tree of life is a type of Jesus Christ, if he is the source and centre of all life to fallen man, then the lesson is most emphatic and blessed that He is to us the source of our physical as well as our spiritual strength and well-being. Did he not teach this expressly in His own words in the temptation: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God;" and still more clearly and vividly in his discourse concerning the living bread, "He that eateth me shall live by me; he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him"? It may be objected that the tree of life was withdrawn after the fall, and that this teaches us that we have no right to look for supernatural physical strength on account of our fallen state and moral curse. But in the revelation of mercy made after his fall, we

are told in language which we shall more fully expound in the next chapter, that God placed at the gate of the garden cherubim, &c., “to keep the way to the tree of life ;” not to close the way, but *to keep the way*. Now, if these cherubim were, as we shall find, types of Christ and His redeeming work, the meaning is very beautiful and clear, that while the fall has shut us out from Eden and the old sources of life, and we can no longer approach the tree of life through Eden, yet there is a new way to it provided through Christ, and that we can approach it by way of the cherubim, that is, by the way of the Lord Jesus, and through Him receive its life-giving strength in the measure of our need for this mortal state ; and then bye and bye partake of His fullness in the resurrection glory of the Eternal Future.

Have we understood these things ? “Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, who bringeth out of his treasure things new and old.” Have we received not only the truth, but “the spirit which is of

God, that we might know the things that are freely given us of God"? We are in the Palace Beautiful; the Interpreter leads us, and as he shows us all its treasures, he stops and adds, "These things are all your own." Have we received them?—the new creation, the bridegroom's love, the rest of God, the flowers and fruits of His spiritual husbandry, and the life of Christ to be made manifest even in our mortal flesh? Then, indeed, for us is it true even now, "He that sitteth upon the throne saith, behold I make all things new. And he said it is done; I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."



EMBLEMS FROM THE STORY OF THE FALL.

THE inspired account of man's first disobedience and its bitter fruits, is but too real and literal; but back of the simple narrative there lies much deep spiritual symbolism and significance, vividly illustrating not only the dark shadows of sin and misery, but also the whole contrasted light and glory of grace and redemption.

SECTION I.—*The Serpent, or Temptation.*

While, of course, we believe that there was a literal serpent employed as the instrument in temptation, yet the whole language of the Bible unfolds with clear and emphatic fullness, a mightier personality back of the ostensible agent to whom this name is applied in many subsequent allusions. The New Testament writers invariably speak of Satan under this figure, and the closing scenes of the Apocalypse

unveil the vision of his final judgment and destruction.

THE LITERAL SERPENT.

That Satan should come to our first parents in this disguise should not surprise us, and does not seem to have startled Eve herself. Not knowing yet all the properties and qualities of even the natural creation, she may have supposed that there was nothing extraordinary in the serpent addressing her. Never having been tempted before, she could not be supposed to have been on her guard against temptation. For us the lesson is obvious and solemn that temptation will not assail us usually in its naked repulsiveness, and in the undisguised form of its satanic force, but through some unexpected second cause, and always through that which we will be least liable to suspect. The traditional idea that the devil came to our Lord with cloven foot and demoniac form is contrary to the very idea of temptation ; such a creature would scarcely mislead or persuade. An old Scotchman, looking at such a picture of

the temptation, smiled sarcastically at the figure of the fiend, and drily answered, "Yon devil would never tempt me." Let us therefore be looking for the insidious approaches of evil, not in startling apparitions, nor extraordinary manifestations, but in the simplest concerns and most commonplace occurrences and objects of our every day lives, and ever remember that the price of safety is eternal vigilance.

THE REAL TEMPTER.

We need not say that this was the devil; Isaiah calls him "Leviathan, the piercing serpent, even leviathan, that serpent, and the dragon that is in the sea." Paul calls him the serpent that deceived Eve through subtilty, and John calls him that old serpent, the dragon which is the Devil and Satan.

The literal serpent is probably the most perfect type of his spiritual qualities. Of his history we understand enough to know that he was originally one of the most intelligent and brilliant of created beings—"the anointed cherub, perfect in his ways until iniquity was

found in him—and whose heart was lifted up because of his beauty—and he corrupted his wisdom by reason of his brightness—and had walked up and down in the midst of the stones and fire upon the holy mountain of God.” He is the embodiment of knowledge without purity; of wisdom, devoid of principle; and the most brilliant qualities of intellect coupled with motives the most selfish, malignant and desperately wicked. Like the serpent, his chief resource is guile; his wiles are more to be dreaded than his direct assaults. It is evident from this record that his career of wickedness and ruin had already long ago begun. He had dragged down with him in his desperate course the angels who kept not their first estate, and now he had come to wreck the purity and happiness of the fair new world that had just sprung from the Creator’s hand. Why God should allow, even for a season, such an influence to touch his creation, is one of the mysteries of the divine government, which is practically the same as the question of temptation in our lives day by day. This is probably a sufficient

reason—that good must be tested before it can be rewarded, and that all character and righteousness must be devil-proof before it can be finally approved and recompensed.

THE METHOD OF THE TEMPTATION.

His first word to Eve is an unqualified “Yea ;” a complete assent to all that he was about to question and deny ; an absolute and utterly deceiving disguise intended to throw her off her guard by taking sides with her, in order that, from her own standpoint, he might bring her to his. Thus he ever approaches us. He always prefers to fight his battle from our side of the field. He would much rather work from a Christian pulpit than from infidel press or even a theatrical stage. His very first utterance is an unblushing lie, and from that day whenever he has said yes, he has always meant no. Our Saviour calls him a liar and the father of lies. The true way to understand and checkmate him is always to read him by contraries, and treat his promises as curses, and his terrific threats as the pledges of divine blessing.

His second word is a question. It has been said that the interrogation punctuation is simply the figure of a crooked serpent—so that has ever been his favorite weapon. Not directly does he assail our faith, but adroitly insinuates the finest shades of inquiry ; and then when he has lodged it, like the adhesive film of a spider's web, he proceeds, with exquisite skill and celerity, to weave around it the meshes of his fatal snare. His questions are always directed against the Word of God, "Hath God said?" is still his favorite shaft, and it is never so effectual as when preceeded and winged by the old "Yea" of the garden. The atheistic "God hath not said" of Voltaire or Paine is not half so dangerous as the finely insinuating skepticism of his chosen instrument in the religious pulpit and press. Our day is flooded with its arrows of false and fatal liberalism. Soon comes the next stage: "Ye shall not surely die." The spirit of skepticism in regard to the inspiration of the Scripture is always followed by the loosening of the sanctions of divine government, and the denial of retribution. The widespread

and pernicious teachings of such multitudes of so-called consecrated voices in denial of future punishment, and the attempt to establish a system of easy indulgence and boundless probation for the impenitent and obstinate are but the voices of Eden repeated in multiplied echoes in these last times, when the ages meet before the end, and the prototypes of the past are receiving their last and highest fulfillment.

Let us observe that Satan's promise to Eve : " Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil " was not altogether false. The devil does not always lie, else his falsehoods would not be credited. His statements have enough of truth in them to float them ; his drugs enough sweet-ness to make them palatable ; his promises enough credibility in them to inveigle us into his snare. His victims do, indeed, become as gods, even as he himself had become, by renouncing the authority of God, and becoming the master of his own will and the lord of his own life. But this is the very curse of our allen state, and one from which we can only be

saved by the death of self and the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we turn from this scene, what a sad and solemn picture is this first temptation—an Eden of delight; the rich inheritance of every blessing; the very hour of uttermost love on the part of heaven; and yet the hour of peril; the hour and power of darkness; the chosen hour of our temper and destroyer; an hour which sufficed to wreck a world and overshadow a whole eternity. It is to our Eden that the serpent comes in the moment of our most apparent security. Let us “watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation.”

SECTION II.—*The Tree of Knowledge, or the First Sin.*

That this was a literal tree is implied in the narrative; the name applied to it may have been given because of some property in it to stimulate and impart a forbidden wisdom, but more probably because through eating it and thus entering into a condition of sin, man in his own experience obtained the secret of knowledge of evil and the difference between good and

evil. It suggests the important lesson that Satan's chief assaults upon us are directed against our understanding, and that we are in chief danger of falling through our intellect. The symbolical tree of evil is a tree of knowledge; the symbol of good is the tree of life. The devil's promise to us is superior wisdom; the Lord's gift to us is eternal life. The boasted wisdom of the world is foolishness with God; the chief obstacle to simple faith is the spirit of human reasoning and our over-confidence in our own thoughts and judgments. Therefore if any man will be taught of God, "he must first become a fool that he may be wise."

Rowland Hill used to say that the greatest need of many men was to amputate their bodies just above their shirt collars. Before we can be truly taught and led of the Spirit we must first be beheaded and then reheaded in Christ. Without Christ the tree of knowledge is a curse. The process of divine knowledge is life first, "and the life was the light of men." The knowledge of evil is specially to be dreaded. Innocency consists largely in ignorance of evil, and the

sooner we come to realize it, the more surely will we renounce this forbidden fruit and reach the scriptural idea, "wise concerning that which is good, simple concerning evil." The process of sin and temptation in the mind of Eve in connection with the forbidden tree is as instructive as on the side of the tempter. First we see it as it touches her lower nature and excites her physical appetites. She saw that the tree was "good for food." This is "the lust of the flesh" which John mentions as the first stage of sinful desire. Next she sees that it is "pleasant to the eyes;" this is the æsthetic stage, the contact of temptation with the psychical nature, representing the solicitations that approach our tastes, sensibilities, and intellect and emotional nature. And finally it reaches her more-spiritual sensibilities appears as a tree to "be desired to make one wise," representing the spiritual temptations with which the adversary still assails our higher nature, and with which John closes the trinity of evil desire, namely: "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." All these three stages of

temptation we see in the conflict in the wilderness, in the life of Christ Himself, in which he so gloriously conquered where Eve had fallen, and left for us the secret and pledge of victory.

The most solemn lesson that comes to us from this emblem of sin is the fact that in itself the act of Eve was one of comparatively trifling importance. There was nothing in the inherent quality of the sin that appeared to make it frightful. That eating of one simple fruit could bring very serious consequences, naturally must have seemed improbable. Had it been an act of great profanity, bloody crime, or incendiary violence we would have been prepared for some disastrous consequences; but for a thing so trifling as the taste of a single apple to be the pivot of a world's destiny is indeed startling. But here lies the very essence of moral principle and the fine line which separates right and wrong as wide as the poles, namely: that right is right, and wrong is wrong in no degree because of the circumstances or the consequences, but absolutely because of the principle; and the less important the circumstances are,

the more is the principle really emphasized. When we do a thing or refrain from doing it because of adverse results that will follow, we are acting from some other motive ; but when it is so unimportant in itself as to be disentangled from all other issues, and the act is performed simply because of the command itself, then it is manifestly a more perfect act of absolute obedience. The great tests of obedience therefore often lie in very little things. If we can disobey God in what seems a trifle, we exhibit the spirit of disobedience pure and simple, and when we obey him in the minutest trifle which we may not even understand, and whose consequences we cannot be capable of reasoning out, our obedience is most perfect and pleasing to Him. Therefore we find that Saul lost his kingdom through one little act of disobedience, and the old prophet of Israel lost his life by simply going home to sleep in the house of his friend contrary to the divine command ; while on the other hand, Abraham's covenant was established through an act of rigid obedience to a command that seemed incomprehensible.

Eve wrecked the world by one little disobedience, and the issues of our lives likewise are ever turning on pivots as fine as the jewels around which the delicate wheels of our watches revolve. The root of sin in this sad picture is doubt, the tree is disobedience, and the fruit is death.

SECTION III.—*The Fig Leaves.*

The first effect of sin is shame, a sense of nakedness, a strange consciousness which makes even that which was innocent and pure, repulsive and wrong. When we disobey God even the holiest things of life and nature are defiled. The guilty pair at once discover that they have the knowledge of evil, and their sense of shame and nakedness implies far more than mere physical consciousness for it is the beginning of an evil conscience, and the gnawing of that self-reproach which constitutes the curse of sin. The instinct which seeks a covering for their persons in the fig leaves of the garden is a symbol of the vain attempts of man's guilt in every age to

find some covering for its shame and from its penalty. This may stand for the excuses and attempts at palliation with which the soul first seeks to avoid the issue and cover its guilt. This we see in the miserable pretexts and mutual recriminations of Adam and Eve in this chapter. Then the fig leaves may stand also for man's self-righteousness, represented in the next chapter by the offering of Cain, and in subsequent ages by the ceremonies and external services of earth's false religions, which can never cover the nakedness of the sinful heart or satisfy God's demands upon our perfect love and purity. Perhaps more than anything else these coverings represent the innumerable devices of mankind to settle the question of sin and satisfy the guilty conscience through sacrifices, self-inflicted tortures and all the cruel and abominable rites of heathen idolatry. All these are but filthy rags from which the hand of inexorable justice will strip the trembling sinner, and expose his naked guilt to the piercing eye and impartial judgment of God. Sinner, how have you covered your naked soul, and

satisfied your guilty conscience? There is but one robe that can hide your sin and cover your nakedness—the seamless garment of Christ's righteousness.

SECTION IV.—*The Promised Seed.*

The first word of judgment in this dark hour is pronounced upon the serpent in the hearing of the two trembling sinful ones, and it is a word for them of strange and, perhaps, at the time, incomprehensible mercy. “Her seed shall bruise thy head.” This is the first promise of redemption. The marvelous thing about it to us is the calm and infinite resources of divine grace which had already prepared this wonderful remedy, and, without one expression of impatience or perplexity, proceeds to unfold the purposes of salvation which is to undo the wreck of this awful hour. Had we been suddenly called to face such an issue, and found our kindest purposes thus blasted by the wickedness of our enemy and the faithlessness of our friends, we should have been over-

whelmed with disappointment and indignation. But God is ready even for this issue. Ages before He had prepared His plan, "the Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world;" and, reserving the judgment of the transgressors until He has first provided the remedy, He begins to unroll the scroll of redeeming promise which, at the last, reaches its fulfillment in the Cross of Calvary and the consummation of redemption. Marvelous riches of grace which loved us, even when we were dead in sins, "that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us by Christ Jesus!" The language of this promise through all the veil of the symbol and figure glows with the very love and effulgence of the gospel. The very term seed suggests the figure which the Master applied to Himself as the great natural type of life through death. He is the true seed of all spiritual life planted like the corn of wheat in the soil to die, but springing forth to bear much fruit in His spiritual offspring. The seed of the woman is the revealing of the mystery on the incarnation and the babe

of the virgin, and contains a gentle hint for the comfort of poor Eve that her part in the fall should yet be counteracted by her glorious ministry in the plan of redemption. The bruising of the serpent's head, and the enmity which God proclaimed from this hour between the serpent and the seed was the breach of the unholy alliance which Satan had tried to form with the new race, and the gracious pledge that the battle of human redemption henceforth was not between man and Satan, but between Christ and the adversary, and should end in the triumph of redemption and the defeat and destruction of the evil one. But one dark and sad coloring blends with all this glory and victory, and that is the picture of a suffering Saviour. "Thou shalt bruise His heel," is a vision of Gethsemane and Calvary, and the bleeding and dying of Satan's conqueror.

"He sank beneath our bitter woes,
To raise us to His throne;
There's not a gift His love bestows,
But costs His heart a groan."

SECTION V.—*The Coats of Skins.*

“Unto Adam and his wife also did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” Back of this simple statement there lies a whole world of spiritual suggestiveness. Why should the skins of animals be taken for their covering when so many simpler robes might have been provided, without the cost even of animal life and suffering? Why should death so soon follow, especially upon the unoffending creatures around them? The next chapter introduces the picture of sacrifice, and we see the bleeding, dying lamb atoning on the altar—the divinely appointed victim for Abel’s sin. When was this rite inaugurated? Why not at this moment when the plan of salvation had just been revealed, and the suffering Redeemer promised? What more proper than that our trembling parents should have been taught in the strange mystery of suffering and death on the part of the bleeding lamb which they were called to sacrifice, the meaning of the death they had incurred, and the sacrificial death of Him who was to save

them from its eternal bitterness. And then, as its blood was sprinkled on the altar, and its flesh consumed in the symbolical fire, how perfectly it would have expressed the justifying righteousness of the coming Saviour, to take its skin and robe them with its covering instead of the fig leaves of their own self-righteousness.

A shepherd once illustrated this thought with singular beauty. One of his sheep had just lost her lamb, and he tried to induce her to take the care of another lamb, but in vain. Then he flayed the dead lamb, and covered the living one with its skin. At once the mother's attitude changed; instead of rebuffing she welcomed the little nursling, and with the most demonstrative affection gave it the place of her own. So in Christ's robe, and united with His life and righteousness, we are accepted in the beloved and stand in the same relation to our heavenly Father as His own dear Son. Dear friend, have you known the blessedness of the man whose transgression is thus forgiven, and learned to sing :

“Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness,
Thy beauty is my glorious dress.”

SECTION VI.—*The Cherubim.*

The last and sublimest symbol of this scene was the figure which God placed at the gate of Eden under the name of cherubim and the flaming sword to keep or guard the way of the tree of life. We are enabled to discover much of the spiritual meaning of these strange figures from their places in subsequent pictures and revelations. They reappear in the Tabernacle as the complement and crown of the mercy-seat before the ark, and were beaten out of the same piece of gold, implying certainly that they must have the same significance. This imperatively points to the person and work of Jesus Christ, of which the mercy-seat and ark were the most perfect symbols. We find them again in the visions of Ezekiel connected with the gracious presence of God as He reveals His purposes to save Israel, and then subsequently withdraws His presence from the sanctuary until His plan of judgment has been fulfilled. And, finally, we meet this symbol in the book of Revelation as the four living crea-

tures connected with the throne and the Lamb, and singing the song of redemption unto Him that redeemed us out of every kindred, tribe and nation. There they seem not only to represent the person of Christ, but more especially His redeemed people.

Without dwelling in detail upon the argument for this opinion, it is sufficient for the purposes of this volume to assume that they stand as divine symbols—first, of the person and attributes of the Lord Jesus Christ, as our Redeemer and Head ; and secondly, as the representatives and types of His redeemed people—on the glorious principle, so divinely true, that as He is, so are we also, and that the glory, which belongs to Him, He has given to us, and we shall share. Therefore the symbol—which, in the tabernacle and in the garden, personifies Christ more especially and in the Apocalypse of John represents rather Christ's people ; having passed in the great process of redemption into fulfillment in the glory and salvation of His followers, who at length share His pre-eminence and throne—is the type of redeemed humanity : first, in the

person of its glorious Head, and, finally, in His ransomed and glorified people.

With this in view the details of the symbol become most instructive and beautiful. They comprised and combined a figure with outstretched wings and four faces. The first represented a man, and so stands for the perfect humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ and His people, and the human qualities of affection and intelligence thus symbolized. The second face was that of a lion, signifying the lordship and kingliness of Christ and His people. The third, the face of an ox, expressed the two ideas of strength and sacrifice, which were so gloriously exemplified in His might and suffering, and into which we must also enter in the fullness of His fellowship. The fourth was the face of an eagle, sublimely suggesting keenness of vision and loftiness of flight, and the exalted place of glory and blessing to which both Christ and His followers rise in the consummation of the plan of grace. All this is so true that the early fathers used these four symbols as the signs of the four gospels. Matthew representing the lion; Mark, the ox;

Luke, the man, and John, the soaring eagle—God's fourfold picture of His Son. One by one we, too, are following in sublime procession and entering into the spirit of the new man, and the Son of Man, the kingliness of His Sonship, the strength and patience of His crucified and risen life, and the intimacy and exaltation of His ascension and heavenly fellowship; and bye and bye we shall stand with Him in all the glory of His mediatorial throne, and shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our Father. This was the ideal of redeemed humanity which God placed as a group of heavenly statuary, as a pledge of our future destiny, as the goal of our highest aspirations, at the very threshold of man's lost inheritance, and in the very hour of man's deepest fall and darkest gloom. So ever, when things seem the saddest and even our fears have almost overwhelmed us, the same unconquerable love meets our helplessness, lifts up our sinking weakness, and points our languishing eye forward and upward to the prize set before us, and purchased for us by the glorious Captain of our salvation. Let us rise to meet

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His marvelous love. Let us realize these infinite and eternal possibilities. Let us claim these divine resources and promises, and, from the gates of Paradise lost, begin the pathway which leads by the way of the cherubim to the closing pictures of Revelation, and the open gates of Paradise restored.



EMBLEMS FROM ANTEDILUVIAN TIMES.

SECTION I.—*Abel's Sacrifice.*

In the two sons of Adam and Eve, human nature branched into its two great families, and these two races have since filled up the story of human life. The first born was, and still is after the flesh. The type of faith and spiritual life came afterwards according to the inspired order, “that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural and afterwards that which is spiritual.” Like the spiritual seed still, Abel was naturally weak; his very name signifies “a breath,” and seems to express the thought of his frailty as perhaps may have seemed fitting to his disappointed mother in his infant feebleness. His chosen occupation, a shepherd, indicates, perhaps, a quiet, thoughtful spirit, free from the world’s coarse ambitions; and brings him into the line of Abraham, David, and others of God’s chosen ones, and

makes him a fitting type of the Great Shepherd whom his own death afterwards prefigured. He is the first definite example in the Holy Scriptures of the rite of sacrificial worship, and is mentioned in this connection in the epistle to the Hebrews as the first type of justifying faith. No doubt the institution of sacrifice had already been given to our first parents, but Abel is the first whom we behold bringing his lamb to the gate of Eden, and presenting his bleeding offering on the divine altar beneath the brooding wings of the Cherubim. "By faith," we are told, "Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and by it he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and by it he being dead yet speaketh." Abel's sacrifice, therefore, speaks to us through six thousand years as the keynote of the Gospel of Redemption. Other voices have spoken since, but this forever will be the first. His life was brief and simple, but this one act is enough to place its testimony in the very front of the cloud of witnesses, and to give him throughout eternity the foremost

place in the choir that shall sing around the throne "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing."

1. Abel's sacrifice was a type of Christ's atoning death, and he no doubt understood it as the ground of his personal acceptance as a sinner in the sight of God. The language used respecting it in the fourth chapter of Genesis seems to identify it both with the sin offering and the peace offering of the latter Mosaic ordinances. The words of God to Cain in the seventh verse, which may be translated, "a sin offering lieth at the door," would seem to give this significance to Abel's sacrifice; and the reference to the fat in the fourth verse clearly identifies it with the peace offering of Leviticus, in which the fat was especially offered to God as representing his part in the offering of Christ. These two offerings, as we shall find later in the discussion of this subject in Leviticus, expressed, with great beauty and vividness, the effect of Christ's death in expiating and fully cancelling our sins, and bringing us into reconciliation and

communion with God. The specific idea of the peace offering was that of a feast of fellowship between God and the sinner. He fed upon the fat of the sacrifice, and the sinner upon the flesh, while the blood made atonement and put away both the guilt and consciousness of sin. However fully these details may have been revealed to Abel, it is at least certain that he presented his lamb as an expression of simple faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ, and was justified precisely as we are under the Gospel.

2. His doing this was an acknowledgment of sin and a taking the place of a lost and guilty man at the footstool of mercy, deserving nothing but the judgment of God, and the same suffering and death which he witnessed in the helpless victim whose agonies and death before his eyes were the most affecting picture of what he deserved and what he escaped. This was what Cain refused to do, and the real reason why human nature ever since has also refused to accept the doctrine of Christ's cross and found it an offence. It is the humiliating confession that we are lost and guilty. A man will not

submit to this so long as he can vindicate or help to justify himself; therefore conviction of sin and deep penitence are involved in true faith in Christ, and form the first stage of the Holy Spirit's saving work in our hearts. And so, in every stage, profound humility keeps step with highest trust, and the cross of Jesus is God's chief instrument for convicting us of sin and crucifying us to ourselves as well as to the world. No soul can see its Saviour until it sees its sin, and then it will most deeply see and feel its sin, when it beholds its Saviour. We must take the place of the publican, before we can take the place of the pardoned. The only believing ground is on our face at the foot of the cross with the penitent's appeal, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

3. Abel's act was an act of obedience and submission to God's revealed plan of mercy as it had been already, no doubt, made known to our first parents since the fall. This was the gospel of that early day, and in receiving it, Abel did exactly what we are commanded to do now, and what the pride and unbelief of Cain

and all his race have ever since refused to do. "Going about to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteous God, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Abel did not stop to reason about the matter, but he simply came in God's appointed way and was accepted. This is faith, and everything else is unbelief. Cain tried to invent a way of his own and perished. Naaman thought that the waters of Abana and Pharpar of Damascus were as good as the Jordan, and he, too, would have perished had he not afterwards obeyed God's very instructions. The Pharisees were of the same race, and through the pride of their unbelief they lost the salvation of their own Messiah. And so, to-day, the two classes are following in the same opposite lines; the one taking their own way, and the other submitting to God's way. Where are we standing? Let us yield our hearts implicitly to the obedience of faith. Let us submit ourselves to His judgment as condemned sinners, and then to His grace as pardoned sinners; and we can claim not only

His mercy, but His justice and faithfulness to vindicate us as we meet Him on His own ground, and approach Him through His own appointed way.

4. We are told by the apostle that Abel's sacrifice involved a still further element, namely: believing that he was justified and righteous through the merits of his offering. Not only did he believe that he was a sinner, but he believed as strongly that now he was a pardoned sinner. Not only did he take the place of condemnation at God's word, but he rose also to the place of acceptance and sonship, "By faith he obtained witness that he was righteous." Faith must not stop with the penitent's plea, but must rise to the song of the pardoned: "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid." There is no presumption in this; it is simply honoring God's own word, and it pleases Him far better than our tears and pleadings after we have claimed the promise and the blood. His

absolute word is, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Not to believe this and take our stand upon it is to make Him a liar, and to add the sin of unbelief to the sins which we are confessing. There would have been no humility in the prodigal's skulking in the kitchen after his father's tears and embraces of reconciliation. The good Francis De Sales was once visited by a poor, trembling sinner, who proceeded to tell him, with bitter tears, of his life of infamous wickedness. The good man listened, and then knelt with the penitent, and claimed the divine forgiveness in a few simple words of trust, and then, turning to the penitent, said: "Now, my dear brother, I want you to pray for me and bless me." The man was thunderstruck. "Bless you," he replied, with deep humility, "how can such a vile sinner as I presume to bless a holy man like you?" "Why, my dear brother," replied the good saint, "you are a vile sinner no more; have you not just been washed in the blood and clothed in the spotless raiment of the Lamb,

even more recently than I, and just as perfectly as I, and therefore I want the first touch of your new blessing." The man at once saw the position that God required him to take, and trembling for very gladness he dared to claim his place as a child of infinite and everlasting love.

Yes, this is indeed our place, "IN WHOM HE HATH MADE US ACCEPTED IN THE SON OF HIS LOVE." O! what a transformation! What a miracle of divine transition! One moment lost, the next saved; now a child of the wrath, then a child of God; in the same hour reeking with blood-guiltiness, and whiter than the snow. O! have you claimed your place? Will you accept this unspeakable gift?

"Helpless and foul as the trampled snow;
Sinner, despair not! Christ stoopeth low
To rescue the soul that is lost in its sin,
And raise it to life and enjoyment again.
Groaning, bleeding, dying for thee,
The Crucified hung on th' accursed tree;
His accents of mercy fall soft on thine ear—
Is there mercy for me? Will He heed my prayer?
O God! in the stream that for sinners did flow,
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

Abel received this consciousness by simply believing. There is no doubt, however, that

God added, after he believed, a visible token of the acceptance of his sacrifice, which is expressed by the words, "God had respect unto Abel and his offering." So our faith in Christ's promise is also sealed by the witness of God and the stamp of the Holy Ghost upon our heart, and also by the new place of love, honor and blessing to which God at once exalts us.

This is expressed by the word "respect." God treats us with divine respect. The moment we become united to Christ, we are the objects of His highest consideration; we are entitled to the regard He gives to His own dear Son; our persons, our prayers and all our interests become infinitely important to Him, and every angel in heaven is proud to minister to our welfare, and wait His bidding for His sons and daughters. O! what a place of honor and dignity does Christ bring us to! "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

6. But Abel also had to suffer for his faith. It cost him his life. He was not only the first witness to faith, but also the first martyr for

Jesus ; and, therefore, the word " witness " and martyr are the same word in the Greek language, and in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. Often-times our testimony for Christ must be through suffering, and sometimes through death. While we rejoice in the honors of our high calling, let us also be true to our testimony, so that not only while we live, but even " being dead " we shall, like Abel, " yet speak."

SECTION II.—*Cain's Fruits and Flowers.*

The first-born of Eve was welcomed by her fond maternal heart with a name which expressed all the pride and promise of earthly hope. She called him "a possession." She cried, "I have gotten a man," and, alas, he was but a man ; the true type of flesh and humanity. His life as a husbandman may perhaps have expressed, in some measure, his proud resolve to overcome the curse of the fall, and force from the ground by skill and culture something that would contradict or counteract the thorns and thistles of the curse. He was proud of his work, and

no doubt forgot that the ground had been cursed for man's sin.

Not only did it become the sphere of his occupation, but also the symbol of his spirit. His heart and life were of the earth earthy. He knew no higher religion than that which was born of earth, and had no higher aim and instinct than its pleasures and pursuits. And so when the time comes for public worship, the offering he brings is simply the fruit of his own farm, and the products of his own works. He recognizes no condition of sin or need of forgiveness, but treats God on equal terms, as one with whom he feels at liberty to exchange presents as with a human friend. He is not without religion, as few men are, but his religion has no recognition of sin, and therefore no need for atonement.

At the same time it may have been a very beautiful religion, as the religions without Christ often are. His altar at Eden's gate must have been much more attractive to the eye than Abel's; it was probably a tasteful rustic scene, perhaps festooned with flowers and vines, laden

with the yellow ears of harvest and the many tinted fruits of orchard and garden, and worthy of the highest ideals of psychical culture, which the same spirit to day is employing in oratorical ornaments, musical performances, architectural decorations and all the splendors of a gorgeous ritual and imposing ceremonialism.

As Cain's offering had no recognition of sin, it had also no place for Christ. There was no symbol of the coming Saviour, no figure of the atoning lamb, no apprehension of the need of suffering and righteousness to satisfy the Holy God. Such is ever the characteristic of natural religion ; such is ever the test of the true gospel.

To the old monk, in the vigils of his cell, it is said, the devil appeared in the most fascinating form. He looked like an angel, and spoke like a god. He said, "I am your Saviour ; I have come to bring you the assurance of my love and the vision of my glory, and I want you to worship me." The saint was almost deceived, but suddenly he turned to his visitor and said, "If you are my Saviour, I will worship you and adore you ; but if you are

you will not refuse me the token I ask. If you are Jesus you will have in your hands and feet and side the print of the nails and the mark of the spear wound." In a moment the apparition changed; a cloud of blackness passed over his face, and with curses and hisses he vanished from the room. So we can ever test the true faith and the true gospel. It will ever have the marks of the crucified. Let us discard all forms of worship and religion which do not recognize fully our sinful and lost condition, and exalt with unmistakable definiteness the suffering and sin-aton ing Saviour.

Cain's offering was simply his works; the things that he had wrought with his sinful hands. It is the perfect type of every form of self-righteousness. They were unacceptable because they were the works of a sinful man, and the fruits of the accursed ground. And so our best works are tainted by the fact that we who perform them are sinners, and that they spring from the soil of our human nature which is already under the curse. There may be varieties and degrees of depravity, but the

highest degree is enough to taint our best righteousness and make it as "filthy rags." And so Cain was rejected, as every such soul must be in the presence of God. Where do you stand, dear friend? Have you still your own righteousness, or have you the righteousness of Jesus Christ?

By many persons this question is regarded as a mere strife of words and question of dogmas, but we find very sadly in the story of Cain that a man's faith is the real source and spring of his life and conduct, and that a defect here will be fatal in all the issues of character and destiny. Unbelief, in Cain, steadily developed into wickedness of the most violent and aggravated form and led to irretrievable ruin. The first step is simply self-righteousness and rejecting Christ; the second is malice, envy and murder.

Not all at once did sin grow into these awful proportions. The word of God to Cain, as He gently pleaded with the erring one and sought to hold him back from his terrible career, contained a tremendous figure of the progress of

evil. "Sin lieth at the door," has been translated, "Sin croucheth like a wild beast at the door." His sin was then but a young lion, and only crouching for its fatal spring. As yet it might be conquered; "Unto thee shall be its desire, and thou shalt rule over it." That is, now you can subdue it if you will, but if you wait till it has made its spring, you will be destroyed. Alas, it became too late for Cain to resist, and the unbeliever became the bloody murderer and a heaven-exiled fugitive, branded with the judgment of God.

But there is one more stage in Cain's career. This chapter closes, not with a scene of eternal judgment, but with the bright and fascinating picture of the first human city and the scenes of early culture, wealth and sensual delight. Separated from God, and lost to eternal hope, Cain, like others, turned to the world and became engrossed in its enjoyments and prospects. The religion that was born of earth, as shown in his city, terminates with earth.

The names of Cain's family and their pursuits are all connected with the various phases of

wealth and culture. It was in his line that arts manufactures, riches, and social and sensual pleasures had their birth. There we see the earliest types of physical beauty, musical taste, ambitious enterprise, city life, polygamy, and the panorama of earthly pleasure and human culture that have since grown into such vast proportions, and led men away from God and righteousness. It is the birth of mammon. It is the type of the world. It is attempt of fallen human nature to find a paradise without God. It is the sad and mocking effort of the heart which has lost its inheritance to find a substitute beneath the skies; and it will end, as the picture of Cain's city ends, in the same bloodshed and violence.

SECTION III.—*Enoch's Translation.*

Symbolical numbers and names have a very important place in the Holy Scriptures. We find both of these in the story of Enoch. He was the seventh from Adam, and seven is the number of perfection. In him the race

reached its ideal type, and that which God will ultimately bring redeemed humanity to realize, both in character and destiny; for Enoch realized God's highest ideal in both. He walked with God, he pleased God, and God took him in a chariot of glory above the floods of death.

His name, also, which signifies "Dedicated," was a type of his consecrated life and the root idea of true holiness, namely: single-hearted dedication to the will and glory of God. It is remarkable that the other race—the race of Cain—had an Enoch, too, and that Cain called his city after Enoch, his first-born son. Does this not teach us that the world is dedicated to its aims and its gods with a singleness and strength of service which might well be a lesson to the children of God? Cain lived for earth with all his might, and Enoch lived for God with all his heart, and soul, and mind, and strength. The life and character of Enoch were in bright and lovely contrast with his own age. Three thoughts give the key to the whole: (1.) He walked with God; it was not a self-

constituted and independent holiness, but a personal contact with the Father, on whom he leaned for every step and supply, and with whom he kept step moment by moment, as we may still do on the heavenly pathway with our blessed Master. The life of holiness is not our life, but Christ in us, an ever-abiding all-sufficiency and presence.

(2.) Enoch walked by faith. Therefore it was not by works that Enoch pleased God, but by a life of trust and simple dependence.

(3.) Enoch pleased, and had the testimony that he pleased God. His aim was to please God ; he expected to please God, and he had the consciousness that he pleased God. He believed that God accepted his simple-hearted purposes, and God witnessed to his consciousness the sense of an unbroken fellowship. So we may please him, too. His will for us is not an inexorable or impossible task, but a gentle and gracious plan adapted to our condition, fitted into the chain of circumstances every day, and made possible to us by the constant presence and unfailing resources of His

Spirit and grace. Are we thus walking with God, thus walking by faith, thus pleasing Him, and basking in the light and gladness of His conscious and constant acceptance? Happy place! If it does not bring us to heaven in immediate translation, it at least brings heaven down to us.

The fitting climax of such a life was reached at last, and was the most majestic interposition of God's power in the antediluvian age, as well as the sublime type and figure of the future that is awaiting the Church of God in these last days. Without the intervention of death, without fear or pain, and perhaps in sight of the generation to whom he had witnessed especially of the future judgment and the coming of Christ, the holy man was translated, like Elijah in later times, and like his glorious Master from the mount of Olivet, to the heavenly world. Undoubtedly it is meant for us as a figure of the translation which awaits the faithful children of God at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. While Noah's deliverance through the ark and the deluge is

the figure rather of the destiny of such as shall pass through the days of tribulation that are coming upon earth, and be brought safely to the Millenial age beyond us ; Enoch's translation represents rather the glory that awaits the watching ones whom shall be found walking with God at the beginning of this time of tribulation. "Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air."

It would seem that this blessed hope is especially linked with a life of holiness and a fearless testimony to the second Advent, both of which we see exemplified in holy and faithful Enoch. He lived a life of holiness, and he preached the Lord's coming; so God put upon his life and testimony this glorious seal. So let us watch and keep our garments for that day. When the marriage comes, they that are ready shall go in, and they that love his appearing shall receive the crown of righteousness.

Thus have we seen in these ancient ages the fulness of the Gospel in type and symbol; the faith of Abel, the holiness of Enoch, and

the hope of glory; and, in contrast, the unbelief which rejects the blood, finds its portion in the world and bears its fruits of sin and misery. The Lord save us from the way of Cain, and lead us and keep us in the faith of Abel, the walk of Enoch, and the hope of our Master's coming.



EMBLEMS FROM THE STORY OF THE FLOOD.

THE deluge has left its impress on the traditions of all ancient nations and in the structure of the globe itself. The Greeks have the story of a flood as vivid as the Bible narrative. The Assyrian inscriptions give accounts of an early inundation very similar to the account in Genesis. We read the story of the deluge also in the traces the waters have left upon the rocks of earth, so that the truth of this part of the Bible history is written ineffaceably in stone.

It is not historically, however, that we wish to look at it so much as in the light of symbolism, to see what there is of deeper truth lying beneath the narrative. It would be a great mistake to read the Bible symbolically only; but it is beautiful to see hidden truths below

the history, and above and around it, like the nebulous light that surrounds certain stars with a cloud of glory.

I.—*The Flood Itself.*

This is full of symbolical teaching.

1. It was a sign to man that God is holy and just and pure, and will deal with sin in righteousness. It was a great object lesson of His retribution for sin. It was also a foreshadowing of the judgment to come. It is a type of the deluge of flame that shall one day sweep around the world again. Both our Lord and his apostles speak of the deluge as a foreshadowing of that coming day “when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.”

“As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man.”

2. The deluge is not only a type of judgment, but of salvation also. The principle of salvation by destruction is taught all through the

Bible. The deluge destroyed sin from the earth but it saved the Church; it swept away the world of wickedness, but it was the very means of preserving the little flock. The plagues of Egypt illustrate the same principle; they ended in death to very many of the Egyptians, but they saved the children of Israel. The destruction of the Canaanites after the children of Israel entered the land of promise exemplifies the same truth; their extermination was the salvation of the chosen people. The cross of Calvary brings us salvation from eternal destruction by the destruction of sin and Satan in the death of Christ. So in the epistle of Peter we are told that eight persons were saved "by water." The deluge therefore stands as a type of the great principle of deliverance by destruction; the salvation that comes through the love and power of God to His own people by the very thing that overthrew their enemies.

3. We learn also from the deluge the great principle of death and resurrection; perhaps this thought could not have been embodied in a more definite and striking figure. In the flood, the

little church was buried in a seeming grave, and came forth on Ararat as if raised from the dead. It was the great type of Christ's death and resurrection, and it points forward also to His second coming when the earth shall have passed through its last baptism of suffering and come forth to the new age of blessedness and purity. And therefore Peter connects it with the deep spiritual significance of Christian baptism : "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good *conscience* towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

II.—*The Ark.*

This also has a spiritual and typical meaning. It is the picture of the Lord Jesus Christ as a shelter from the storms of judgment and the tempests of life.

1. Jesus Christ, like Noah's ark, is God's provision for our safety from the floods of judgment. The ark was not constructed according to the

scientific plans of human carpenters. It probably would not pass the building department of our day. But it was a welcome refuge when the storm came. It was built by Noah in exact conformity to the directions given to him, and it saved all those who trusted it. Jesus Christ has not been prepared according to man's ideas of things. "When we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." But He is a hiding-place, for those who trust Him, in every time of need. In Him we are safe from all the floods of judgment that will come upon the ungodly, and from all the storms and trials of life. And He is the life boat through which alone we can reach the heights of yonder harbor.

He is the one in whom we die, and in whom we rise again to newness of life. Noah seemed to die in yonder ark. It was only seeming, however, and he stood ere long under the rainbow arch in the light and glory of a new world. So we lie down in baptism in His arms. It is a symbolical tomb, but we do not die. It is in seeming only. He had the bitterness of death.

We have the safety of it. We are as secure in our seeming death as Noah was in the ark. Through Him we enter into death, and we come forth in Him into life eternal. Was there ever a ship before that started from the low lands of earth and landed on the mountain tops that touch the skies? None indeed, but the ship of grace which sails from earth to heaven.

Was ever such a voyage?

III.—*The Raven.*

As the fierce waves of the flood begin to subside, a strange figure may be seen above the waters, the only thing that is happy and at home in the wild conflict of the elements and the wastes of desolation. It is the raven that Noah sent forth from the ark, and it went to and fro upon the waste of waters until the flood had subsided from the earth. What a type of the great personality of evil—the prince of all evil, Satan himself. It is the same figure of evil omen, whether it is found in him or in his followers.

1. The raven is characterized by restlessness. It went to and fro, to and fro, constantly, but it returned not again to the ark. It fluttered hither and thither with weary wing over the tossing wave, finding there its congenial element in the wild sea, the reeking carrion and the decaying vegetation of nature. It was a restless soul having no quiet and no repose. What an image of him who goes about constantly seeking whom he may devour. Image, too, of the restless, unquiet spirit of man. You can see this unrest in the spirit of the world, whether in the ball-room or in the counting-house. In the ceaseless round of excitement he is ever vainly seeking for repose and satisfaction; but he never shall find it until the raven is cast out of him, and the dove is put within. In heaven he would have no rest, but would break every barrier in the wild struggle to get away to find his home in the eternal abyss of darkness, and the society of other spirits as restless and dissatisfied as himself.

2. The raven is characterized also by great filthiness. It found a congenial banquet in that

from which everything else recoiled. It fed upon corruption. The dead of the earth lay upon the waves, and they became its prey. There is a spirit akin to this also in man. It is a type of impurity in life or thought or feeling. The wild passions in the heart of man, the sensual desires that take delight in vile pictures, in unrestrained indulgence, in filthy stories, in abominable literature, or unclean and idle gossip—these are the desires of the flesh, they are ravens—every one.

3. The raven is a bird of great melancholy. His spirit is as morbid as the food he lives upon. He is the bird of despair. The poet pictures him as sitting above the door of his heart and crying “nevermore.” What a picture of evil, restlessness, uncleanness and morbidness. May the dear Lord save us from the reality.

IV.—*The Dove.*

There is another symbol in the ark very different from this. It is the dove. You will not find it in regions where the raven delights

to dwell. It went forth from the ark with gentle wing and moved for a while over the wild waste of waters, but unable to stay in the place where the other found its home, it came back again into the ark. A second time it went forth, and this time it found an emblem of its own sweet spirit, an olive branch which it plucked from some springing shrub, and hastened back with it into the ark. A third time Noah sent it forth, but now the waters were abating from the earth, the flood was passed, and it did not come back any more.

All this is suggestive of the Holy Spirit and the heart in which He rests.

The three outgoings of the dove from the ark are all symbolical of the work of the Holy Ghost. The first time it went forth, it fluttered for a time over the waters, but finding no place of rest, it went back to the ark. So in the ages before Christ came the Holy Spirit went forth over the earth, looking for a place of rest, but failing to find one. He touched men here and there, but He did not always strive with man. He lingered with Abraham, and Isaiah, and

Jeremiah, and David, but He did not come to dwell in the earth because Jesus had not yet come. He was abroad upon the world, seeking a place where He could build a nest and remain, but He could not find it, and He returned again to the bosom of the Father.

A second time He came, and this time He did find something. He came during the ministry of Jesus on the earth. He rested on Him like a dove, and thus could linger awhile in the world. He plucked an olive leaf of peace from the cross of Calvary, and, with this token of pardon and reconciliation for the earth, He went back again to Heaven, with the message that the floods of judgment were abating.

A third time He went forth, and this was on the day of Pentecost. The world was ready for Him now. The floods had gone, and there was a place in which He could build a nest, and fold His wings, and rest. And now He came not as a fluttering guest, but as an abiding presence. He came to build a nest and rear his young. Beloved, has the gentle dove got a nest in your heart? Is He rearing His brood

in your house? If He has, the spirit of Christ is there, and “the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, meekness, temperance, faith.”

V.—*The Altar of Noah.*

As the flood subsided and Noah came forth, he built an altar, and offered sacrifices unto the Lord, no doubt by divine direction. God looked down upon the scene with satisfaction. He had long been disgusted with what He saw on the earth. He had smelt the stench of sin until He could stand it no longer, and He at last turned the floods of water upon the earth to wash it away. But the judgment was not sweet to Him either. It was all a great charnel house, and it was dreadful to Heaven. But at length there was something on earth that pleased God. “The Lord God smelled a sweet savor.”

There are people to-day who call themselves christians, and who are preaching in evangelical churches who either openly repudiate the

doctrine of atonement by the shedding of blood, or so refine it that there is nothing but an apology for it left; they have taken the blood all out of the gospel; they have done away entirely with all thought of vicarious suffering for sin on the part of Christ; they say they cannot bear to hear that God would be willing to butcher His Son for the sake of sin. It makes him like some wild Indian tiger. They cannot stand the smell of it—they call it a doctrine for the shambles. How different is the story of it here in Genesis. When Noah's altar was erected and the bleeding victim was burning upon it, we are not told that God turned away in disgust—the odor to Him was as sweet as the breath of spring blossoms; or of the frankincense from off the golden altar. He smelled a sweet savor; He saw that man was no better than he was before; He looked into his heart and saw there the same black wickedness as ever. He looked at Noah and saw that in a little while he, too, would be drunk in his tent; and yet in spite of all He promised that He would not again curse the ground any more for

man's sake, "for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." He would not henceforth expect anything from man, for he was a poor, helpless creature; but He would count on Jesus Christ. The cross of Calvary has been sending a sweet odor up to Him continually ever since. He would not curse man any more, but He would take him at his worst for Jesus, sake. From that time He has looked upon man's unworthiness as covered by Christ's righteousness and counted him worthy for Jesus' sake. When Jesus is brought to God as an offering He looks at you in Him and smells a sweet savor; it is the sweet savor of Christ, not of you. Keep Him ever upon the heart's altar, beloved, burning with the fires of the Holy Ghost; so shall you ever be sprinkled with the blood of the atonement and God will ever say of you: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Then, too, the Dove will hover over you and find a home for itself in the surrendered heart, where Father, Son and Holy Ghost shall make their everlasting abode.

VI,—*The Rainbow.*

The sublime and majestic climax of this series of types is yonder splendid arch spanning the sky as Noah looks back upon the departing clouds. What a sight it must have been to the eye that first beheld it. Nothing is more beautiful to the eye of a child than the lofty magnificence of the rainbow. It is the closing symbol connected with the flood. “I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.” So the rainbow is the token that God’s covenant is with us. We read of it in the book of Revelation as a complete circle: “There was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.”

There is a blessed meaning in this for our Christian life. It is the token of God’s covenant with you and me for spiritual blessing. It is a type of the nearer intimacy into which He designs to bring us. It is a symbol of the covenant of His everlasting love, “as I have

sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I will not be wroth with thee nor rebuke thee. Sorrow is the dark background on which He paints this token of His love. The rainbow is formed by a combination of light and darkness; the light shining on the small drops of rain, they are separated into these beautiful prismatic colors.

His grace can take the storm-clouds and tear-drops of our life, and turn them into arches of triumph and jewels of glorious lustre.

The time is coming when our rainbow will be a complete circle. We shall not have half victories then as now. That which we have only half seen, and which has perplexed and bewildered us, will develop into a full circle of light and glory. We shall know as we are known, and our sorrow shall be turned into joy.

There has been a difference of opinion as to whether the rainbow had ever been seen before. Possibly it never had. Science tells us this is nonsense. It says the causes which produced the rainbow must have existed ever since the

creation. They may have and yet never have caused a rainbow. We do not see a rainbow every time it rains. God lets the light strike on the cloud frequently at such an angle that there is no rainbow. Could He not have kept back the sun and rain from ever getting in that position, which would produce this beautiful appearance if He had so chosen? Undoubtedly He could. Perhaps for two thousand years all the causes of the rainbow never combined, but God held them in suspense until the right moment came, and then He suddenly painted it on the sky by flashing the light at the exact angle, which should divide the rays into their prismatic colors, and form the majestic arch for the first time.

Beloved, there are hidden causes in us which could, at any moment, produce spiritual rainbows. God has kept them back, but some day He will bring them all out. It is possible to be preparing every day, by patient endurance of trial, by victories gained through faith in His name, a crown of glory for our head; when God shall let the light shine in on these

troubles and temptations, and they will take in a different aspect, and be turned into triumphal arches and jewelled crowns on which we shall gaze in raptures of praise and wonder. Thank God, dear friends, for the things you have not seen yet, the surprises He is preparing for you out of the very heart-breaks that have been so terrible to you. When He wipes your tears away you will know that promise to be true: “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”



EMBLEMS FROM ABRAHAM'S TENT.

SECTION I.—*Abraham's Tent, or the Pilgrim Life.*

THE first symbol we find in the patriarch's life is his moving tent. He has left the wealth and earthly prospects of his native home and committed himself to the vicissitudes of a pilgrim life. While an heir of the world, he is himself to have no certain dwelling place, but wander as a stranger on earth “looking for a better country, and a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

The first lesson of Abraham's tent is that of Christian pilgrimage. Like him, the children of faith must also be separated from the world and live as strangers and pilgrims upon earth, confessing that, here, we have no continuing city, but seek one to come. How little this is realized in the selfishness of modern Christianity

and the worldliness of the professed followers of Christ is very sad to contemplate. It is not necessary in order to a spiritual state that we get out of the world or be isolated from its practical affairs. The real essence of worldliness is in the spirit rather than in the circumstances ; in the love rather than the possession of earthly things. One may possess millions with a truly consecrated spirit and be a real miser over a few worthless treasures. The spirit of consecration requires that the heart shall be detached from worldly aims and motives, and that we should hold the world as not possessing, and use it as not abusing it. “For the fashion of the world passeth away.” We should never have our hearts or our interests so invested in the things of life as not to be able, like Abraham, to emigrate at God’s call to some altered circumstances, or even to fold our tent altogether and enter upon our eternal existence. Let us pause and ask ourselves, where is my life invested ? Where is my heart directed ? Am I living in a tent, or building for myself a palace of earthly ambition or indulgence which

the hand of death will soon crumble into a narrow tomb.

But again, Abraham's tent not only tells us of the pilgrim life, but also of the true hopes and eternal promises for which faith must wait, and possess now only as he possessed the land, as a homeless wanderer. It was all his own, and yet shall be his literal inheritance; but during his earthly life he found in it no permanent resting place. So faith must still accept its heritage and learn, not only to hope, but also quietly wait for the salvation of God.

SECTION II.—*Abraham's Altar, or the Consecrated Life.*

Wherever the patriarch rested his tent, there he also erected an altar to his God. This was the expression, in the first place, of his steadfast faith in the plan of mercy which God had revealed at the gate of Eden, and through the sacrifices of His own appointment. This altar represented to his piety all that for us is involved in the Cross of Calvary and the blood

of Jesus. This was ever the spring of his consecration and the support of his future hopes. He saw afar off the coming Redeemer, and trusted in His grace even in the dim light of the Gospel as it was revealed to him in these simple emblems. More clearly afterwards this mystery of the Saviour's death and resurrection was unfolded in the offering of his own Isaac on the mount, and the substitution of the victim provided by Jehovah in his place. For us also, the cross of Jesus and the simple faith which rests in His atoning blood must ever be the source and support of every grace. But Abraham's altar was not only expressive of the Saviour's blood, but his own consecration. The burnt offering which he was accustomed to lay upon that altar was the especial expression of the entire devotion of his whole being to God, of which his obedient life was the constant pledge and evidence, and the sacrifice even of his dearest affections and divinest promises and hopes was the last and crowning proof. Not only did he leave his sins at the foot of that altar and lay himself upon it a living

sacrifice, but even the very son that God had given, and the promises which were linked inseparably with him were also laid there in unreserved surrender and committal. This is the last and sublimest height of Christian life, not only to give to God the thing which we have called our own, but to give back and hold as his the things that he has given, and the most precious and sacred hopes and trusts of our life. It was this which God so prized in the spirit of his servant and for which He so blessed and honored him. Such trust and such consecration need never fear that they can lose aught by this absolute surrender. Indeed, our blessings are never fully blest until like Isaac they are given back as from the dead, and henceforth held not as our own, but as God's deposit in our keeping. Have we come to Abraham's altar? Have we left our sins beneath its flowing blood, and accepted the atonement of its great sacrifice, and then have we laid ourselves upon it in identification with that divine sacrifice, a whole burnt offering unto God? Yes, have we even placed there our Isaacs of

affection—nay, even of divine promise and spiritual hope and expectation, and are we holding all, even our most sacred hopes and interests, as divine trusts committed to us for His service and glory? Thus alone shall we know the secret of Abraham's faith, as we enter into the fullness of his consecration. In speaking of the intimacy with which he treats him, God gives this significant record, "for I know him." While Abraham fully trusted God, God also felt that he could fully trust Abraham.

Dear friend, can God depend on you and your absolute singleness and fidelity to Him? Blessed be the glorious grace, we may take Him for this perfect heart.

SECTION III.—*Abraham's Seed, or the Faith Life.*

It was in regard to the promise of his seed that the patriarch's faith was chiefly exercised and tested. As first received and understood by him, the promise referred to his literal offspring, but as the covenant became more

explicit and the light more clear, it extended into vaster meaning, and the promised seed became to him the symbol of his coming Saviour. That this was so is plain from the Apostle's language in Gal. 3:16, "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." That Abraham so understood it, is implied in the words of Christ to the Pharisees, "your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad."—Jno. 8:56. So that Abraham's faith and promises were all summed up and centered in the personal Christ. So let our faith find its centre, and our promises always reach their true focus in Him who is the first and the last, and the All in All of Christian faith and hope. Let even our dearest earthly affections and expectations, like Abraham's beloved son, be linked with and lost in the person of Jesus himself. Then, indeed, will all our life be heavenly, and all our heart strings bind us to His heart of love.

But there is another most important thought suggested by Abraham's seed, namely : that his

faith and hope were lifted beyond himself and the narrow limits of his own short life, to find their fruition in the lives of others and reach their fullness not so much in the blessing which he was to receive, as to the blessing he was to become. The linking of all his promises with his seed was a constant challenge to the spirit of disinterestedness and teaches us that we, too, are to lose our lives in the lives of others, and find our blessing in being a blessing. Natural science teaches that the great design of every plant in nature is expressed in the seed, and realized in the principle of reproduction. While we may value the fruit tree chiefly for its rich and luscious fruit, nature recognizes the little seed imbedded in the juicy pulp as the true value and essential fruit of the plant; and so God estimates us, not so much for what we are, as for what we may become in the issues of our lives. The tree is therefore known by its fruit, and the test and standard of the fruit laid down by Christ is, "Some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred fold."

The promise was given to him in the form of two most striking symbols ; the first of these was the sand upon the sea shore which his offspring was to outnumber. This, no doubt, had special reference to his earthly posterity, the literal seed of Abraham which will doubtless completely realize in the coming ages of Israel's restoration, even the expressive fullness of this promise. The second was the stars of heaven, whose number and splendor modern science has expanded far beyond Abraham's highest conception ; but even this shall be more than fulfilled in the spiritual seed of the Father of the faithful. A great multitude that no man can number, as various in their spiritual character, and infinitely more glorious than the stars of heaven shall yet gather at his feet, and prove to him and the universe the faithfulness of God, and the blessedness of trusting Him. The same splendid figure is used in describing the rewards and prospects of christian service, "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever." We also may therefore claim the same glorious promises and

possibilities. This is the true aim and the most satisfying recompense of human life. When the applause or criticisms of man shall be forgotten, when the transient discomforts or enjoyments of life shall be past, when the fire shall have tried every man's work, and the wood and stubble shall have drifted away in the ashes of the last conflagration ; oh, then it will be blessed indeed to gather out of the wreck of life the treasures of precious souls we have been permitted to save, and place them in His crown and our own. God grant that we may have such constellations in yonder firmament.

“There needs not for such the lowe-written story,
The name and the monument graven in stone;
The things we have lived for, let these be our glory,
And we be remembered by what we have done.”

SECTION IV.—*Abraham's Seal, or the Resurrection Life.*

God's covenant with Abraham was ratified by a special sign which is called the seal—that is, a divine token intended to mark the importance and certainty of the transaction, and the

stability of the promises involved. This seal was the rite of circumcision which from this time became the distinctive mark of the Old Testament covenant, and the initiatory rite of Judaism. It was not a mere arbitrary sign, but was fitted to express in its own nature the most important truths. It was especially significant of that great principle which underlies the whole economy of grace, namely: the death of the old and the resurrection of the new life. Circumcision was the death of the flesh and was designed to express the great fact that our carnal nature and our very life itself, in its inmost center and springs, must be crucified and then divinely renewed and purified. This is the same truth taught us in the New Testament ordinance of Christian Baptism, only the latter gives more emphasis to the life as the former does to the death side of the figure, as might naturally be expected from the place of these ordinances in the two dispensations. Thus early and thus vividly did God begin to teach His people that the new life must be a creation and must spring out of the grave; and that man's fallen

nature cannot be improved by culture or gradually raised to purity and heaven, but that the sentence pronounced at the deluge must be literally fulfilled: "The end of all flesh has come before me."

Hence this figure of circumcision runs through the entire old Testament as the picture of sanctification. "Circumcise your hearts," "uncircumcised in heart," etc. Have we learned this searching and humbling, yet blessed truth? And blessed it is that we may die to this sad and sinful self, and live with Him who died for us and rose again. Have we entered into the power of His resurrection and been made conformable unto His death, and are we reckoning ourselves to be dead, indeed, unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ? Failure here has been the secret of almost all our failures. Thoroughness and faithfulness here will save us a thousand deaths in the Christian life and make our life a joy and power.

The day prescribed for the rite of circumcision was as expressive as the rite itself. The eighth day is the beginning of a new week, and

thus expresses most fully the idea of the new creation and the resurrection-life. God grant that we may all know the full meaning of this ancient seal and pass out of the seven days of nature's life into the eighth day of life's new and eternal week of resurrection power and blessing.

If Christ would live and reign in me,
I must die, I must die.
Like Him I crucified must be;
I must die, I must die.
Lord, drive the nails, nor heed the groans,
My flesh may writhe and make its moans,
But in this way, and this alone,
I must die, I must die.

When I am dead, then, Lord, to thee
I shall live, I shall live;
My time, my strength, my all to thee,
Will I give, will I give.
Oh, may the Son now make me free!
Here, Lord, I give my all to thee,
For time and for eternity,
I will live, I will live.

SECTION V.—*Abraham's Name ; or, the Confession of Faith.*

The covenant must not only be sealed, but claimed. Abraham's faith must not only be confirmed by God's seal, but also must "set to

His seal that God is true." When God commits Himself to His promise, He expects us to do the same as unreservedly, and so Abraham was soon required to prove his trust by open and unequivocal confession. The opportunity was afforded in a very striking and significant manner. God required him to assume a new name, slightly modified in form from his old name, but signally different in meaning. The name Abram meant the mighty father, but God gave him the name Abraham which signifies the father of a multitude. The first he could claim without involving any question of propriety, but the assuming of the other involved the confession of his future hopes and expectations. And when we remember that this was done at a time in his life when his age precluded the natural probability or even possibility of the thing he claimed, we begin to see how very real the test must have been. He was an old man, and his body was now dead. The hope of natural issue was contrary to common sense, and yet the adoption of the new name would necessarily be known to all his

acquaintances, and would require an explanation and proclamation of his unreasonable hopes. For one possessing his dignity and influence with his family and followers, this must have been naturally very trying, and the trial was rendered still harder when it was protracted through a long season of apparently fruitless waiting. But the faith of Abraham shrank not from the full ordeal. Not only did he profess his confidence in his Father's fulfillment of the promise, but he proceeded to act upon it as if it were already past, and thus became the witness of that highest of all degrees of faith—that principle which is, perhaps, essential to all true faith, of which the apostle says that it “ calleth those things that are not as though they were.” This, indeed, is the faith attributed to God Himself by the apostle in Romans 4: 17; and on this principle He is constantly acting in treating future events as if already real. Thus his own dear Son was regarded as slain from the foundation of the world. Thus we are recognized even in our earthly life as seated with Christ in heavenly

places and invested already with the dignities and glories of our future inheritance. This is the faith which God requires from his people and which he is willing to give them; and indeed nothing but the Spirit of Christ Himself within us can enable us thus to believe and testify. Again let us ask ourselves, what are we witnessing to in our lives? How far have we really risked our all upon God's promises? How much have we ventured upon His simple word and counted the things that are not as living realities, not only in our hearts, but by the entire witness of our lives? Have we thus accepted His pardon and confessed it? Have we thus received his sanctifying grace and claimed our inheritance in Christ's fullness? Have we thus taken Him for our physical and temporal needs and ventured forth, without waiting for evidence, upon His simple and naked word? It is the record of God's ancient saints that they were witnesses of faith. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews they shine like stars—like constellations in the firmament—of the Old Testament. Shall our names thus

shine in the annals of this dispensation? We are writing the record every day; God help to inscribe them as with the point of a diamond in the Rock forever; and let the record ever be "I believe God," and "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

SECTION VI.—*Abraham's Vision, or the Trial of Faith.*

Sooner or later the test of suffering must follow every promise and confession. To Abraham it comes in a significant symbol recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, the vision of a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that passed between the portions of his sacrifice, in the darkness of the evening, and the deeper gloom that had gathered about his spirit. So for us the promises of God may be followed by the going down of earth's sun in deep trials and even the horror of great darkness which sometime comes upon the inner sky; and then amid

the darkness comes the fiery furnace of heart searching anguish and suffering. The children of faith must be tested in the very fire, and the more victorious the faith, and the more glorious the witness, the hotter must ever be the flame, until it seems as though both life and faith must be consumed. But gold is indestructible, and faith survives and brightens with its trial. There is another figure in the vision, and that is the burning lamp that shines amid the darkness and above the smoke of the furnace. This is the heavenly presence which never forsakes us in the darkest hour. Majestic symbol of that yet grander figure which in later days came to Israel as they came forth from Egypt's iron furnace, the pillar of cloud and fire—the type of the light and protection which the Holy Spirit brings to the tried and trusting heart as it passes through the wilderness. It was in this hour of darkness and vision of fire that God gave to Abraham the most definite promise of his future inheritance, writing in the vivid light of the furnace flames the very names of the nations that he should dispossess through his seed, and

speaking of it all in the perfect tense as already accomplished. Is it not even so with us that it is in the hour of keen suffering that God has ever spoken to us His greatest words, and burned into our vision with a definiteness and vividness which faith can never forget, the promises that He is now fulfilling in our grateful lives. Let us not fear the darkness and the fire, but trust the more through that which comes chiefly to try our trust. Suffering is not always meant to burn out the dross, but often to burn in the promise. Let us not think it strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try us; it is more precious, even to Him who sends it, than gold which perisheth, and will "be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

SECTION VII.—*Melchizedek; or, the True Object of our Faith.*

A mysterious human figure crosses the path of Abraham for one brief hour, and leaves an impression so vivid that it has remained as a

prophetic vision of the coming Messiah, both in the Psalms and in the new Testament. This figure is regarded by many authorities as really superhuman, and indeed no less than the actual and personal Christ Himself living on the earth before His advent in human form, in order for a little to represent to Abraham what his earthly life afterwards represented to the world, His mediatorial character and work. We cannot accept this view without stronger evidence than the Scriptures offer. It would seem uncalled for that Christ should twice appear on earth in actual personality. We believe that he did appear to Abraham in human form just prior to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, but this was doubtless an assumed appearance. Melchizedek is represented as an actual human personage. He was the King of Salem, the ancient Jerusalem ; he was also a true worshiper and official priest of the most high God; probably like Job, one that had preserved the primitive faith handed down from Noah without corruption, and that God used him as a special type of the official character and mediatorial work of the

coming Messiah. The Apostle declares that he was without father, without mother, without descent. He must mean by this that his record is thus mysterious and unknown ; that he stands across the course of time without introduction, a vivid and transient figure expressing in one brief glance the aspects which God would reveal to us concerning His Son. These are expressed by the name, position and office of Melchizedek. His name in Hebrew signifies King of Righteousness ; his political position was that of King of Salem, which signified peace, and his official character was that of a priest. He thus combined in his own person the two offices of priest and king, and the two qualities of righteousness and peace. These are the four thoughts which constituted Christ's mediatorial office and work. He is our priest and king, and he brings us His righteousness and peace. As our priest He settles for us the question of sin, and secures our spiritual standing and privileges with God ; as our king he protects us, subdues us, governs us and guides us, and conquers our enemies and His. As our true Melchizedek

he combines these two offices in one person so that the king, whose majesty we might dread, is the priest whose suffering and intercession have saved us from our sins and reconciled us to His favor. He brings to us his justifying and sanctifying righteousness, and becomes to us the Lord, our righteousness. And he will bless his people with peace. His sprinkled blood pacifies the guilty conscience. His pardoning love brings us into peace with God. His gentle Spirit breathes upon our hearts his rest. His bosom offers us repose for every care and fear, and in the inner chamber of his presence we find the peace that passeth all understanding. All this he represented to Abraham. All this Christ is to us. Have we met and accepted Him like the ancient patriarch? Have we yielded to Him our worship and submission? Has he become our great High Priest, our supreme and glorious King? Has he covered us with his righteousness, and become to us our sanctification? And have we at the footstool of His throne received Him as the Prince of Peace, and found it true in our happy

experience "of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end."

Such are some of the symbols of Abraham's life. As we leave them, shall they leave us also on our pilgrimage for the better country which he has reached, and on the altar of sacrifice where he found all by giving all? Shall they have brought us the vision of our seed, and sealed us with the secret of our true life, the death of self, and the resurrection life of Christ? And shall we go forth from them confessors, like him, of our covenant promises, even if it be in the fiery furnace and the midnight gloom of life's deepest trials? And, above all other lessons, greater than Abraham or Abraham's faith, have they brought us to the feet of the Prince of Peace and the King of Righteousness, as the Author and Finisher of our faith, and the Alpha and Omega of all our hopes and blessings?



EMBLEMS FROM THE LIFE OF ISAAC.

IN the fourth chapter of Galatians, the apostle gives us a key to some of the most important events in the life of Isaac, and along with these a principle which may be applied to other portions of the historical Scriptures, as a key to their interpretation. He tells us that the birth both of Ishmael and Isaac was typical of the divine dispensations; the former representing the Law and the Flesh; the latter, the Gospel and the Spiritual Seed; and that the expulsion of Ishmael and the sole inheritance of Isaac completed the type as respects the passing away of the law and the permanence of the gospel. He also applies the teaching of these symbols to the spiritual life of the individual Christian. Authorized by this divine pattern, we shall endeavor reverently to gather the spiritual lessons, not only of these facts, but others in the life of this remarkable

character. More reserved and passive than the other patriarchs, Isaac is, perhaps, more obscure and less understood by most Christians than any of the characters of the book of Genesis ; but there is none that, when properly realized, impresses itself so vividly upon the heart, and teaches such profound and searching lessons for all Christian lives. A life very largely made up of common-place events, it is just the life that meets the needs, the failures and the testings of most of us ; and we trust we shall find many points of contact with that which is most real and essential in our religious experience.

SECTION I.—*The Birth of Isaac.*

The apostle that we have already referred to, declares that he was born after the Spirit and according to promise. His birth was not natural and ordinary, but extraordinary and supernatural. Not until nature had failed, and the hope of issue from the bodies of Abraham and Sarah was humanly improbable, did God even

promise the covenant seed ; and, even after this, an interval of testing had to come before the promise was fulfilled. His birth, therefore, was the direct result of omnipotent power, and so it stands as the type of that greater birth, which, in later ages, came through Mary of Bethlehem, even the Incarnation of the Eternal Son of God. This greater mystery and mightier miracle was distinctly foreshadowed in the babe of promise that came to Hebron's tent.

There is another miracle and mystery of grace, which was also foreshadowed by the birth of Isaac—that is, the new birth of all the spiritual seed of Abraham. Just as truly as Isaac was born of the Spirit, and Jesus became incarnate through the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, so “except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.” This is not a natural reformation, not the result of human energy or will, but the work of the Almighty Spirit; beyond the power of nature and after it has failed. “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God: which were born

not of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Have we experienced this mighty new creation? Blessed be God, it is for us as well as Abraham.

It is not only by the Spirit, but also through the promise. It is not an arbitrary favoritism of heaven, but "as many as received Him," to them it is given. Would you have this new life which brings you into all the blessings and hopes of the covenant? Come to Christ, and receive the immortal life which He waits to breathe into every living heart.

SECTION II.—*The Birth of Ishmael.*

Ishmael stands for the flesh and natural life, and the bondage of the law under which it lies. When we speak of the flesh, we do not mean merely that which is gross, sensual and basest in human nature, but all that is born of Adam and part of the natural life. Ishmael and Esau had many lofty human qualities, and Ishmael's race to day are more noble in many things than their fellows; and so the natural

man is often a generous man, a cultivated man, even a moral man. The unregenerate woman may be a beautiful girl, a faithful wife, an affectionate mother, even a social benefactor ; but this may be all mere instinct and humanity. This is not to be despised; this is not depreciated even in the Scriptures, but it cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The word “natural” in the Epistles is literally “psychical,” the man of soul rather than the spiritual man. This is the nature which all the sons of Adam inherit, and which sin has tainted and overshadowed with the curse.

Like Ishmael it is the first-born and has already claimed its sovereign rights in every human heart, before grace appears upon the scene. It is into this home, where Ishmael has grown up with all his established rights, that Isaac comes ; and so it is in the heart that has walked after the flesh that the grace of God implants the new life of regeneration. Dear friends, where do we stand in this matter? Let us not deceive ourselves because our flesh is not the debased, gross and vicious nature which we see

in some. Let us remember the solemn picture of the life which cannot enter heaven. "Wherein in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." May God fulfill the other picture to all who may read these lines: "But you hath He quickened which were dead in trespasses and sins."

SECTION III.—*The expulsion of Ishmael.*

The position of the infant Isaac in Abraham's tent, by the side of Ishmael, was very similar to the position of the new born but yet unsanctified soul in the conflict with its old carnal nature. We can readily imagine the innumerable petty tyrannies and persecutions to which the little rival of Hagar's child was constantly exposed. It is the type of the battle which goes on so long in many a Christian's soul; in which he strives in his own new strength, but often in vain, against the stronger impulses and tendencies of an evil

heart. The picture is drawn in the seventh chapter of Romans with painful vividness and ends at last in the bitter cry of the baffled soul, “O! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” The strife was ended in Abraham’s tent by Sarah, who, realizing at once the impossibility of such a life, and the peril of her most precious hopes and promises, demands the prompt expulsion of Isaac’s rival. “Cast out the bondwoman and her son!” is the hard demand, from which Abraham’s sympathy recoils, but which God’s wisdom approves and confirms, and which Abraham sees at least to be unavoidable; and so Ishmael goes forth to his own place, and Isaac remains the undisputed heir of the covenant promises and the peaceful master of the patriarchal nursery.

We need not say that this stands for the decisive moment when the regenerated soul rises to its freedom. Definitely and wholly surrendering the old heart to death and exclusion, it receives the Holy Spirit and the personal Christ to fight the battle henceforth in the

victory of faith, and possess the entire spirit in rest, purity and complete consecration. It is not necessary that Ishmael should cease to exist, nor can we claim that sin is dead, but Ishmael is henceforth outside the tent of Isaac, and so self and sin should be likewise outside the citadel of the will, and the sanctuary of the heart. Sin and Satan are not dead, but we are henceforth dead unto sin and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us stop and ask ourselves, which of these pictures is the true representation of our inner life? Is the feeble principle of divine grace, struggling for its very life in the midst of all the contending passions and impulses of our carnal heart, and persecuted by the flesh from day to day, like Isaac at the hands of Ishmael; or have we, notwithstanding all the pleadings of nature and sympathy "crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" and entered into the rest and victory of a single heart and a sanctified spirit, in fellowship with Christ, who henceforth fights our battles and garrisons our soul.

There is a great difference how we spell a single sentence in the Epistle to the Galatians; "The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh," is the sad picture of the ceaseless warfare between our spirit and our flesh. But "The SPIRIT lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the SPIRIT," describes the battle in which the Holy Spirit, not our spirit, wages the warfare, and always wins the victory. May the Lord lead every weary heart to the surrender and the decisive trust which will bring this glorious triumph. This is our right under the Gospel just as much as it was Isaac's by the promise. Sarah, in this, represented the Holy Ghost, who is ever demanding for us our sanctified rights and pressing us forward to claim them. Let us yield to her pleadings, and "cast out the bondwoman and her children."

It is also implied that this deliverance brings us not only into the life of the Spirit, but into the liberty of the Gospel. "They that are led of the Spirit are not under the law." Until we reach this experience the soul is ever acting in some sense under bondage and com-

pulsion. Henceforth its service springs from life and love, and is "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Besides the application of this incident to the individual Christian, it has also a larger reference to the two dispensations of law and grace; Hagar and her son representing the Mosaic system, and Isaac and his seed the dispensation of free grace under the Gospel. Like Isaac and Ishmael the former has given place to the latter, and we live in the enjoyment of its light and love and holy liberty. Against the idea of returning back to the bondage of that law through the Judizing spirit, Paul earnestly protested in his letter to the Galatians, and emphatically taught that the spirit of the law would ever lead to the works of the flesh. It is as true to-day, and as necessary to be remembered. Mere morality and discipline must ever fail to produce the fruits of true holiness. They can only spring from the grace of God, the love of Christ, and the living power of the Holy Spirit.

SECTION IV.—*The Sacrifice of Isaac.*

The expulsion of Ishmael does not end the trials of Abraham's covenant child; there is yet to come a deeper test and a profounder lesson, and a test and lesson that have their parallel in every consecrated life. The command suddenly comes one morning which consigns all this hope and happiness to the dark and inexorable decree of death. "Take now, thy son thine only son, whom thy lovest," is the mysterious mandate, "and offer him for a burnt offering, on one of the mountains that I shall show thee." We are accustomed to look at this scene chiefly from the side of Abraham, and think of the amazing faith and fortitude of the father's heart that could yield not only its affections, but its very faith and hope and all that was linked with God and the future, in blind obedience and submission, and yet unfaltering faith, to this strange and awful test. All this is true, and all is worthy of the high approval which God Himself has placed upon it. It was the supreme test of Abraham's faith

and obedience. But have we looked at it aright from the standpoint of Isaac? Have we thought of all that it meant to that sensitive and shrinking boy,—the strange and sudden separation from his mother's side, the parting that must have been so trying, the journey of three long days of suspense, that strange reserve of anguish in his father's face that could not speak, yet could not conceal the overhanging shadow, the innocent question “where is the lamb?” the sudden bursting upon his consciousness of the full meaning, as he himself was bound and laid upon that altar, the silent submission, all the more impressive because no word is given us of his suffering, the strange horror of seeing his own dear father stand above him with that gleaming knife, the awful moment of agony and suspense in which an eternity could be felt before the hand was stayed and the tragedy averted? It was the same to Abraham, it was the same to Isaac, as though the sacrifice had been accomplished. The bitterness of death was past, and to all time and eternity Isaac never could forget the memories

of that hour. He had really died in the surrender of his will, and his future life was overshadowed with the consciousness that he was as one raised from the dead. So the Scriptures speak of it, and so must they have felt it.

Not only was it the figure, as nothing else ever was, of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ by His Father's hand for our salvation—a sacrifice which had no arresting hand to stop, no voice to say, "There is a lamb to take His place"—but which went through all the darkness and bitterness and mystery of death for us.

But it has an equally important meaning for our spiritual life. It is to us the symbol of the death of self and the surrender of our inmost life to God which comes oftentimes, in Christian experience, even after that deeper life which we saw begun in our last section. The expulsion of Ishmael means separation from sin and the flesh. The sacrifice of Isaac means the death of self, and the dedication of the inmost will and life and being unto God.

By various ways the searching test is made, and the soul is led to yield itself to His will ;

and, in the hour of sacrifice, find its life, and henceforth "live not unto itself, but unto Him who died for us and rose again." Henceforth it is easy to yield to everything that God wills. The spirit has been melted and bowed, the head has been laid low on Jesus' breast, and the keynote of life is "not my will, but thine be done"; and while God gives back even Isaac, and gives His higher, better will to each of us, it is henceforth quite different. It is so linked with Him, and so mingled with our self-renunciation that it is no longer we, "but Christ that liveth in us." Thus must we learn to lay everything, not only the evil, but the good on His altar, and hold even our highest hopes and sweetest promises and divinest blessings and inmost life as His and all for Him, writing upon them: "Of Him, by Him and for Him are all things, to whom be glory forever and ever, Amen."

SECTION V.—*The Marriage of Isaac.*

The bridal of Isaac and the wooing of Rebekah is a sample of sacred romance as

beautiful in its way as the story of Eve, and is as full of literary charm as it is of sacred meaning.

The fact that Isaac had but one bride in an age of polygamy was a marked type of his illustrious Antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is gathering to Himself His one spiritual and beloved partner in the fellowship of His glory and His kingdom. Isaac's bride was chosen by the most deliberate counsel and care from his own kindred in distant Mesopotamia; so God is calling out of this remote world a people for His Son, and a race who are linked with Him by the kindred ties of His own blood. Eliezer, Abraham's servant, who was entrusted with the choice of the bride, is the striking type both by his name and character of the Holy Spirit, through whom God is calling and leading us to Christ. Like the faithful servant, the blessed Spirit comes on his long and distant journey to seek and find the soul that he is wooing. He meets us, as they met Rebekah, in our common life and in the simple incidents of our human experience, which often

lead to the greatest decisions of life: like Rebekah at the well and the other woman in the parallel scene at Sychar. As he laid before Rebekah and her family the claims of Isaac, and spake not of himself, but of his master and his son, and all his wealth and glory, so the Holy Spirit hides Himself behind His work and message, and ever seek to reveal to us the glory, and beauty, and the claims of Jesus. As Eliezer exhibited to Rebekah, and even placed upon her person some of the treasures which Isaac had sent, so the Spirit not only shows us, but gives us the precious things of Christ, and blesses us with the tokens of His love, even before our full bethrothal and unconditional consecration. Like that ancient messenger He gently waits a little season for our answer, and then, like him, He presses the urgent call, "Wilt thou go with this man?" Like Rebekah we must each answer for ourselves. Christ will have no unwilling wedded ones, but demands our whole-hearted and joyful surrender. "Hearken, O daughter, and consider" is His cry; "forget also thy kindred, and thy father's house: So

shall the king greatly desire thy beauty." Rebekah's reply is as prompt and unequivocal as ours should ever be. "I will go," is the answer which links her forever with the most glorious hopes and destinies of humanity. She has nothing to give but simply herself; that is all He asks from us. Her very wedding robes, and even the veil in which she is to be presented to Isaac, were brought by the servant, and were presented to her before she meets her husband; and clothed in his robes, riding upon his camel, led by his servant, and wholly consecrated to to be all his own, she goes forth to meet him.

What a procession! What a picture of our standing! Thus we, too, may wear the wedding garments ere we meet Him at the marriage. He asks from us no costly portion, but gives us all He requires from us. While we are told in one verse that "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready," we are also told in the next it "was granted to her that she should robe in fine raiment, clean and white—the righteousness of the saints." Her robes were "GRANTED TO HER" like

Rebekah's, and, like ancient wedding garments, at the very door of the king's palace. We meet Him in His own beauty and character, and are accepted not for what we are, but for what he makes us and is made unto us. Sanctification, thus, is all of grace, for "we are His workmanship, and created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before hath PREPARED that we should walk in them."

Let us put on our heavenly raiment, and keep our garments with holy vigilance, "lest we walk naked, and they see our shame." And as when Rebekah beheld her lord approaching, she wrapped herself in his veil, and so met him with a token that he could not mistake, so when we shall come to our Master, may we be found not having our own righteousness, but that which is of the faith of Christ, wearing the robes which all heaven will recognize as the token of the bride of the Lamb.

The procession is at length nearing home, and Isaac had gone out to meet it. It is even-tide, and others do not see the meeting fully, as, clasped in each other's arms, they enter the

bridal tent, and Rebekah becomes the wife of the chosen seed, and the future mother of the Redeemer Himself. So, too, shall it be in a little while ; we shall behold on the distant horizon the signs of home, but ere we reach it our blessed Lord will have hastened to meet us on the way. It may be the eventide of life. It will be the eventide of the world's history ; and our meeting with Him in the air may not be seen by earth's busy myriads, but we shall know Him and He shall recognize us by the tokens He has given, by the robe we wear, and by the witness of the Holy Spirit who shall be with us still. Happy meeting ! Blessed hope ! True home ! The eternal idea of every marriage feast and wedding vail and throb of earthly love. God grant we may be found in that happy company.

SECTION VI.—*Isaac's Wells.*

The later scenes of Isaac's life are not quite free from clouds. In an hour of trial and famine, he seems to have acted without divine

counsel. He went down into the country of the Philistines, where he found abundance of food, and had an extraordinary measure of wordly prosperity, but where he had no recorded instance of the Divine presence, and met with continual trouble from the inhabitants of the land. There seems to be no doubt that in this he acted wrongly, and has become an example to us of the needless troubles and unavoidable spiritual loss which will ever follow even tacit disobedience, and the acting of our own wisdom, prudence and self-will. Isaac obeyed so far that he did not go down to Egypt; but he went a little out of the land. So we, without going into the world, may touch its spirit and get complicated with its entanglements in some things, and so have to learn Isaac's lesson.

The first trouble arose from the lack of water, and when they dug the necessary wells or rather opened the ancient wells of Abraham, their enemies strove with them, and claimed the prior right to them. The world will easily get the best of us when we fight it on forbidden

ground. Isaac showed at least the power of grace in the spirit which he manifested, notwithstanding his mistake. He did not contend with them, but moved on from well to well, leaving them in possession, and calling the wells by the names suggested by his bitter experiences: "Contention," "Hatred," and finally "Room," when at length they let him alone. We shall always find room enough when we, like him, pursue a course of gentleness, and prefer a temporary sacrifice to an unseemly strife.

This quality of patience and endurance appeared more strongly in Isaac than any of the patriarchs, and had its real root in the self-sacrifice through which he had passed on Mount Moriah. So they who have died with Christ once for all, will not find it hard to die daily on the innumerable crosses of life's trials.

At length he moves entirely out of the land of his sojourning, and pitches his tent at Beer-sheba in the land of promise. Immediately, that very night, God appears to him in token

of His approval, and renews with him His covenant, while his servant comes with the tidings that "a fresh and invaluable well has just poured out its abundant waters in the camp. They give it the name of the covenant that has just been renewed, and call it Beer-sheba, or "the well of the oath." So we shall find that a decisive return to the exact line of God's covenant will ever bring to us deliverance from our troubles, the presence of God, and the fountains of blessing.

Not only so, but the Philistines were glad to come to Beer-sheba and beg an alliance with Isaac and his tribe. The man whom they persecuted and asked to leave their presence while he was on their level, is sought for as a friend and counsellor when he rises to his true place and separates himself from them. So we never can bless the world till we are separated from the world, and never can lift it up until we get on a higher level than its own. The men who are not afraid of losing their influence are the men whom God will give influence with others. The men who are willing to risk the loss of the

world's friendship, for the sake of God, are the men to whom the world will go in its hour of need for comfort and help and heavenly blessing. Let us be true to God! Let us ever stand within the confines of our inheritance, and God will bless us and make us a blessing.



EMBLEMS FROM JACOB'S PILGRIMAGE.

WORE than any of the ancient patriarchs, Jacob speaks to us. He comes nearer to our life in human infirmity, in human imperfection, in human worthlessness, in human suffering, trial and discipline, and in the grace of God, which was magnified by all these things.

God calls him a “worm,” as a true figure of his grovelling, crooked, naturally selfish, and supplanting nature. But God gave to the worm the mightiest of names, the name of a “Prince with God,” showing that grace can take us in our lost estate, and seat us with Christ in heavenly places, making us partakers even of the Divine nature.

SECTION I.—*Jacob's Birth.*

The first symbol that comes up in the life of Jacob is his birth. We see here a figure of his future. It would seem as if in him there was,

even in his mother's womb, some of that inborn spirit—the beginning of that faith which afterwards developed so mightily. So Hosea says, “He took his brother by the heel in his mother's womb,” as if in some way he had that in him which pressed him afterward to claim the mightiest promises of God.

SECTION II.—*His Birthright.*

The birthright to the ancient patriarchs seems to have involved not only the headship of the tribe, but the spiritual privileges of the Divine covenant. They seem to have understood in some measure—Jacob did, and Isaac at a later period—that there was more involved in the birthright than the mere headship of his house. Undoubtedly his mother had taught him the hopes involved in his birth and the promises which heralded it, and, looking down the ages to come, he may have seen afar the coming of the Saviour and linked with it the hope of his eternal future. This it was that made the act of his claiming the birthright,

notwithstanding all that was mean and selfish in the way he got it, an act worthy of the highest commendation. Had he claimed it by the rights that belonged to him according to the promises given before he was born, it would have been an act of the highest faith. It is the same act which we perform when we prize and claim the offer of our salvation and sonship in the family of God, and let everything go to secure it. This had been promised to him before his birth, as his mother had, no doubt, taught him, and he should have put in his claim and let God work it out. Jacob, however, mingled his own infirmity with the faith that would otherwise have been right.

He claimed the prize with the tenacity of faith, and then marred his faith by adding his own works. God counted the faith, dropped out the works, and burned out the sin with the discipline of suffering. And yet we cannot forget that he saw its value, and Esau despised it. Esau said, "I am at the point to die, what use is it?" Esau had no sense of the eternal future, or he would have prized the birthright

above all earthly treasures even in the dying hour. Jacob saw the treasure, and eagerly claimed it, and made it his own. So you stand with Jacob when you claim your birthright ; when you lay hold on your gospel rights ; when you take with a firm faith, not only the covenant of mercy promised before you were born, but when you press on to take your whole inheritance in God—not only to be saved, but to be sanctified ; not only to believe, but to become an heir of God, a prince with Israel, and a partner of the glory of your Saviour. This is the meaning of the birthright, and the faith that claims it.

But while we imitate his faith, let us avoid his unbelief. He that believeth doth enter into rest. He that worketh, worketh because he does not believe. When you are sure God has given you the blessing, you rest. But when you are afraid God will fail or Esau outwit, then you try to help and only succeed in hindering. Jacob's falls were caused by the crookedness of his own nature which God had to burn out of him. God help us to learn the lesson, and so

believe that "in quietness and confidence shall be our strength," and we shall not only hope, but "quietly wait for the salvation of God."

SECTION III.—*Jacob's Vision.*

We pass on to the third emblem of his life, that is, the vision at Bethel.

It came in the darkest hour of his life, when midnight was around him, and a stone was his pillow—a symbol of the darker and sadder lot which seemed to await him. And yet it was in that dark hour in the wilderness, on that stony pillow, that the God of heaven was about to meet him in covenant blessing. The vision of Bethel tells of God's first revealing of Himself to the soul that has chosen Him. Jacob chose God when he chose the birth-right. But God had not met Jacob. Jacob was like us when we take the promise, and have not yet seen the Promiser. You kneel at the altar, and claim the blessing; you hold it by faith, but God always makes the faith a reality. The days pass by, and when He seems to have

forgotten his promise, and faith begins to faint, then it is that all heaven gathers about you. You trust God. When it begins to grow dark and dangerous, when Esau threatens your life, when it is with you the wilderness, the midnight and the stony pillow, then God comes and meets you, and makes real to your soul that which was accepted by your simple faith before. So it has been with you in the revelation of Christ's indwelling Spirit; so, perhaps, in the healing of your body; and so it has been in prayer for temporal things for which you have believed. Vision first, then victory; faith first, then sight; trust simply in His word, and then God Himself in all the fulness of a blessed realization.

Jacob's vision is also a foreshadowing of the pathway of his own life. He sees a ladder, and the top of it reaches to heaven, while God appears at the top as the God of his fathers. How it teaches us that the only true ladder of life is one that reaches to the sky. Jacob's ladder went all the way up to heaven. The ladders of human ambition only reach a few

years ahead. Man's highest ambition is satisfied when he can mount the pinnacle of fame, or reach the fulfillment of some cherished dream : knowledge, perhaps ; friendship, perhaps ; or, perhaps wealth. That is the length of their ladder, it reaches only a very little way. There are fifty, sixty, seventy, perhaps, it goes up as high as fourscore years, but Jacob's ladder had scarcely begun then ; it reached to heaven. O, you that you are young, and, looking to the future, and count so much on it, have you made sure of the highest issues of life and eternity ? Let your ladder reach up to the sky.

And then Jacob's ladder was not only a long one, but it ascended step by step, rung by rung; not all at one bound, but little by little, moment by moment ; so God is leading us on, on, step by step. Are you willing thus to walk patiently moment by moment, overcoming and ascending ?

Again Jacob's ladder rose out of the darkest hour of his life ; and so our blessings are born out of our greatest trials. Is your pillow a hard one ? Is your sky very black ? Look out for the ladder ; it is there against the sky. You

will see it if you look up. Shut your eyes and ears to all the care, fall asleep on Christ's bosom in the trust of faith, and it shall meet your vision with its heavenly vistas and its Divine covenants of promise.

But the best is that Jacob's ladder ended with God, and it had God at the top of it, and God all the way down, holding it up yonder that it might not slip, and supporting the traveler at every step. Let your ladder be guided by His hand, not leaning against the cloudy tower of your ambition, but by the hands that were pierced for you. Have you never noticed a servant, or some one busy about your house, how they wanted you to hold the stepladder while they climbed it? There is one, dear friends, to hold the ladder while you mount to heights that would make you tremble, but for His everlasting arms.

And once more we are taught that not only is God at the top of the ladder, but the angels of His providence are moving up and down every rung, and guarding your steps. So your way is under His direction. Every step is

under His care. And so He says to you, as to Jacob, "I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

Again, Jacob's vision is the symbol not only of life's pathway, but of Jesus Christ Himself—the open Door and the only Way of communion and communication with heaven. Christ Himself has given us this interpretation of Jacob's vision. Speaking to Nathaniel under the fig tree (who seems to have been reading this very chapter) he says, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man." As much as to say, "I am the ladder of Jacob; it is through me that heaven is open; it is on account of my work that the angels of God come, and henceforth it is not to be in the old visionary way, but through the flesh of the Son of God, that you are to have communion with God." So God is not only at the top of the ladder, but all the way along. Jesus Christ comes from God,

and reaches down to man, a living ladder of human steps, and saying at every step, "I am the Way; I am the Shepherd; I am the Guide; I am the Life; I am the Author and Finisher of your faith." Is Jesus your Ladder, dear friend? your Way? your Life? Is every step you take a step in Jesus? Is every step you take a step with Jesus? A keeping step with Jesus? A walking in Him as well as with Him, and a finding that He is something unto you, this week, and week by week, that He never was before? This is the blessed meaning. It is God at the beginning, God at the end, God all the way along, and God all and in all.

Again, we see not only the pathway, and the ladder, but the covenant and the consecration. Jacob rises, and on the altar consecrates himself—with poor, imperfect words it is true—and if it looks like wavering faith, still God takes it, and henceforth his life is linked in tender bonds with Jehovah's everlasting love. Have we made that consecration and claimed that covenant? Is there a voice saying to you, beloved, "I am with thee, and I shall keep thee in all the

places thou goest; and I will not leave thee until I have done all I have spoken to thee of"? Is it not safe to leave all in those mighty arms? Has He given you this mighty word, "I will not stop until I have done all unto thee that I have spoken to thee of"? How terrible life's perils without it; how blessed with it. Have you said, like Jacob, "Of all Thou hast given me, I will give the tenth"? Or, rather, have you cried, "It is all Thine, and I am Thine, and Thou art mine"?

SECTION IV.—*The Victory at Penuel.*

We see Jacob now many years further on, but not many rounds up. He is about where he was at Bethel, and so God has to throw across his path a tremendous shock to arouse him to the true meaning of his life. He lets a trial come that threatens the life of himself and his dearest ones. His infuriated brother with hundreds of armed followers is sweeping down upon him. Here are the little ones, and here the helpless wives and flocks, and the pilgrim

with his staff is helpless against the mighty warrior. It is an hour of extremest trial ; but poor Jacob is at it again, putting out his feelers, sending on his presents, and trying to coax the lion, and see what his ingenuity can effect. Then there seems to come over him a sense of his helplessness, and putting his dear ones in the hand of God, he goes alone at Jabbok's ford. It was night again ; a dark night ; there was not a star in the sky, and I am afraid he did not even see the ladder there now—but he had it out with God, and God came nearer than He had in Jacob's dream. Clouds and thick darkness are round about His throne, and in the darkest clouds you will find Him. But it is different from the vision at Bethel. The danger is nearer now, and God is nearer too. Then it was God at the top of the ladder, now it is God on the level of Jacob, wrestling with him ; having Jacob in His very arms ; and Jacob able to put his arms around his very God. God has come very close to Jacob, because God wants Jacob henceforth to live very near to him. That wrestling has much of mystery in it. That deep, convulsive

struggle some of us can understand who have ever had a night of agony, in which it seemed as though your very loins were wrestling, and the cords of your very heart were taking hold of something invisible. So Jacob went through the mystery of trial, and came forth in the morning another man. It is impossible to analyze all this without destroying the beauty. I took up a hyacinth blossom this morning ; it was beautiful and very fragrant ; I took it in my fingers and pressed it, and the fragrance was gone. So you have to take the spirit of these things. There are lessons here that touch many points. It teaches us that out of the thing that is hardest, we often may get the greatest blessing. Out of the thing in your life bywhich you are nearly crushed, you are to have your grandest victory. Out of the thing that seems ready to conquer and destroy you, God wants to bring to you a faith that you never had before, and a revelation of his love and power that you never dreamed of. That very thing you thought a stumbling stone, God means to make a pillow for your head, and a ladder of ascension to His very

presence. So do not wait until you get into a comfortable position, and say that then you will live a Christian life. "I am going to get to a certain place ; I am going to get things fixed up ; and then I will serve God." Don't say that, but go to God and let him fix up the things, and you will be a Christian through the very experience your trial and deliverance have brought you.

There is something else here that we must have to be strong in prayer, and that is the element of intense earnestness. There is something else in prayer, I know—a rest and trust ; but I do not think the rest comes before the throes of agony are past. There is something in prayer that takes hold of God, and cries, "I will not let thee go until Thou bless me." It is not weakness ; it is earnestness ; it is life ; it is the throes and travailings of a birth that cannot come any other way. It isn't doubting ; it is power, and it will end in rest if you will let God have his way. This is the meaning of your distress and the burden that is on you. It is the Holy Ghost "groaning within you with groanings that

cannot be uttered." Do not try to work up a frenzy of prayer; that is offensive to God and good taste; but when you have the throes and the agony of Jacob's prayer, remember Christ had it, too.

And then, again, we learn at Penuel not only the efficacy of the prayer that overcomes, but also the element that breaks down. Jacob did not get his answer by struggling, until at last he yielded, and fell prostrate at the feet of Him that wrestled with him; then he received the blessing. The angel touched his thigh, and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, and in his anguish Jacob gave a cry of despair, and he fell at the feet of the Mighty One, crying, perhaps, "Lord, help me; I cannot even pray any more." And God may have said, "It is done; you have your answer and your lesson; you have been too strong; you have tried to do too much. You thought you could wring the blessing from Esau, outwit Laban, and now propitiate Esau; you have tried to do things yourself. O Jacob! fall a helpless child at My feet, and let me be your strength, and carry you

henceforth." And as he fell, I am sure he did not go quite down ; he fell into the arms of God ; and as he went forth, though halting on his thigh, he was leaning on Omnipotence. He had not as strong a thigh, but he had an infinitely stronger Saviour. And so, beloved, when we come to this place, too, where our strength is gone ; and when we have no arm but Christ's, I am sure that, after that, we can say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

I need not say the answer came to Jacob next morning. God came to him here, and Esau had to follow. The next morning Esau was there—but a tamed lion—with weeping eyes, and loving arms, and a brother's heart, meeting his brother with reconciliation and tenderness. God had done all that. We must have power with God first, and then we have it with others.

But the best of all was that Jacob was a new man. And God said as he rose, "Thou shalt no more be called Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name, for, as a Prince, hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

And so, brethren, we rise out of our trials, ourselves gone—the old man and woman cancelled, and wearing His new name. What you want to get rid of isn't the sins of Jacob, but Jacob himself. It is to leave yourself, and go out another person in the life of Christ.

SECTION V.—*Jacob's Return to Bethel.*

He did not get his full blessing at once ; he seems to have got away from it for a while, and God says a little later, " Arise, Jacob, and go to Bethel, and stay there." After our hours of prayer and victory, we may go back. You say I had such a blessing, but I lost it. You can go back to Bethel and dwell there. Perhaps you cannot go to the same altar, but you can be in the same arms. Go back to Bethel ; then God will finish the work, and the covenant will be confirmed forever. The failure of Jacob to do this fully was, perhaps, the secret of all his later trials ; Jacob went back, but he did not stay there. If he had, I believe he would have escaped the bitter trials that followed. But a little later we read

that Jacob wandered through the land again. And soon after came the shame of Dinah's fall ; the strife of his sons ; the betrayal and sale of Joseph to the Midianites ; and the wreck of Jacob's hopes for years. O, consecrated children of God, it is a glorious thing to get over Jabbok, but it is a more terrible thing after that to go back ! Jacob went back from Bethel, and for a time he had the bitterest cup that a mortal ever drank. I don't know anything sadder than the second failure after consecration. We read in Judges that after they had entered the promised land, they went back to sin, and their fall lasted four hundred years. O, you that have come, be sure to stay at Bethel ; rear your altar, and dwell forever under the shadow of His presence !

The closing scenes of Jacob's life are full of instruction and comfort. At last it is all right, and standing before Pharaoh he can say, "All things have worked together for good." "The angel that led me all my life long, and hath redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." It was all right at last, and it will be all right

for us poor erring ones. But how many sorrows we may escape and how many snares we shall miss if we will always literally and wholly obey our covenant God, and abide in Him.

SECTION VI.—*Jacob's Grave.*

The last emblem that I shall give you, is Jacob's grave. He was dying in Egypt; he called his family about him and his beloved Joseph, and said, "If I have found grace in your eyes, swear unto me that you will not bury me in Egypt, but with my fathers in their burial place." So they swore unto him, and after a time the long procession moved back again, and they laid him in Machpelah's Cave. Jacob was looking to the time when the trumpet should sound, and the dead arise, and he wanted to have his very bones within the covenant of God. And so, beloved, have you chosen your grave among God's people—I don't mean so much your literal grave, as the future, the resurrection glory? That was the beautiful faith of Joseph when he died; he commanded that his

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bones should be carried back when Israel went through the Red sea. And God wants us to look out for our bones—not as some people do, looking forward to their funeral expenses or a grave stone—but for the time when you shall rise again, and your dust shall be glorified with Christ and his ransomed ones, or covered with everlasting shame and contempt.

Dear friends, what a life; how weak, how poor, how wrong, how erring, how much it needed the grace of God. But the God of Jacob—how tender, how faithful, how good, how patient; and He is willing to be your God and mine. Let us take Him in the spirit of the old hymn, which has been the cradle song of our childhood.

"O ! God of Bethel, by whose hand
Thy people still are fed,
Who, through this weary pilgrimage,
Has't all our fathers' led.
O ! spread thy covering wings around
'Til all our wanderings cease,
And at our Father's loved abode
Our souls arrive in peace."

EMBLEMS FROM THE STORY OF JOSEPH.

THE beautiful story of Joseph's life is the worthy climax of the first book in the Bible, and may well stand as one of the stately and colossal pillars in the portal of the Temple of Divine Truth. It is one of the few blameless lives of the Bible, and stands side by side with Enoch and Daniel in its unblemished loveliness. It is full of the most affecting and practical lessons for our Christian life, and touches at every point our experience of suffering and trial as the children of God, and the great principles of Divine Providence which God is ever working out in each of our lives. And, in the higher realm of typical teaching, it foreshadows the character, and sufferings, the grace and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ with a vividness and power unsurpassed by any of the figures in all this wondrous gallery of divine symbolism.

We shall glance at Joseph's life and character in both these connections, with respect not only to our Christian life and character, but also to his great antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ, blending both aspects as the changing panorama may require.

SECTION I.—*Joseph's Birth.*

He was his father's beloved son, and so the fitting type of the well-beloved Son of God. Nor should we fear to claim the same place and fellowship in Him, for He Himself has taught us that if we are united to Him, and He abides in us, the love wherewith the Father loved Him is in us also, and we are made accepted in the beloved. It will make our trials easy if we always begin the story of our life like Joseph's, with this blessed certainty that we are God's beloved ones. There is something beautiful in the simplicity with which John calls himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved," without the faintest consciousness of presumption. So let us press close to the Divine heart, and love will usually get the place it claims.

SECTION II.—*Joseph's Dreams.*

The consciousness of his coming destiny was divinely impressed on the heart of the child, and with ingenuous frankness he gave the fullest expression to what must have seemed his extravagant pretensions and expectations ; and although rebuked and ridiculed by his jealous brothers, he still persisted in his confidence and testimony. So upon the consciousness of Christ's early childhood came the foreshadowing of His lofty character and destiny even when but twelve years of age. It forces itself into His precocious questions and confession : “ Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business ? ” And afterwards, even in the face of His enemies, and in spite of their hatred and persecutions, He witnessed invariably to His own divine character and glory until, at last, it cost Him His life. So also to the believer, God unveils, both by His Word and Spirit, the vision of his high calling. Sometimes the veil is lifted higher, and the soul is permitted to know enough of the divine plan to prepare it

for service, to fortify it against trials and sufferings, and inspire it for sacrifices and triumphs in the cause of Christ. So the great Apostle pressed on with the invincible cry, “I must see Rome;” “I am sure that I shall come to you in the fulness of the blessing of Christ;” “I know that in nothing I shall be ashamed;” “The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto His heavenly kingdom—“I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.” So also he says to Timothy: “According to the prophecies which went before on thee, that by them thou mightest war a good warfare.” It was for the joy set before Him that our Master endured the cross and despised the shame, and we, too, shall overcome as we steadily hold in view our high calling and our immortal crown.

SECTION III.—*Joseph's Sufferings.*

The sufferings of Joseph are pre-eminently typical of the sorrows laid upon his great Anti-type, our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1.) He was hated and envied of his brethren, because of his testimony concerning himself and his claims to his father's especial love ; so Christ was hated by his brethren, persecuted, rejected, and at last condemned and crucified, chiefly on account of His claim to be the Son of God and, His unfaltering witness to His Messiahship and glory.

(2.) Joseph was sold to his enemies for twenty pieces of silver ; and so the Lord Jesus was betrayed and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles by the council of His own nation, and judged and condemned, in spite of the attempts of Pilate to release Him.

(3.) Joseph was separated for many long and lonely years from his fond father, and was really given up for dead ; and so Jesus left His Father's bosom, and even bore the very hiding of His Father's face and the anguish of His wrath and judgment on account of sin, and at last died under the dark cloud of divine judgment.

(4.) Joseph was exposed to the most powerful temptations from the world, the flesh and

the devil, but resisted with inflexible fidelity to the will of God and the voice of His conscience ; so Satan assailed the Son of God with all the allurements and solicitations of evil, but found nothing in Him. Of Joseph we have no recorded blemish or willful sin, but of Jesus we know that he was “holy, harmless,” undefiled and separate from sinners, “and was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin.”

(5.) Joseph was accounted guilty of the sin of others, and really suffered innocently, because of another’s wrongdoing ; so Jesus “was made sin for us who knew no sin,” and bore “the iniquity of us all.” He was crucified under the judgment of human and ecclesiastical law as a criminal, and was so accounted by His own contemporaries and judges. This is the keenest of all humiliations, to be assumed guilty of that which we utterly abhor. The shadow of sin upon the soul is darker even than its penalty.

(6.) Joseph humbled himself to a lot of the deepest degradation and the most menial drudgery and toil, and did it willingly and with all his heart, accepting his situation with

beautiful submission and patience; so Jesus became not only "the Man of sorrows," but a man of toil, laboring at His work-bench, with sweat of brow and weariness of frame like the poorest of men; and, to the end of his life, knowing all the hardships of poverty and want, weariness and homelessness. "The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head," was His uncomplaining cry, "I am among you as he that serveth," was his chosen place.

(7.) Joseph became the companion of criminals in Pharaoh's prison; and so our blessed Saviour "was numbered with the transgressors," crucified between two thieves and accounted a malefactor.

(8.) Joseph was the victim of wicked men, and, in all his suffering, he knew that they were held responsible for their voluntary wickedness; yet he recognized in all his sad experience that it was the will of God using and overruling the passions of men to fulfill His higher ends of benevolence and wisdom. In speaking afterwards of his suffering, Joseph adds no word of reflection or regret; he sees the hand of God in

every step, and above every sinful hand. He says, "God sent Me before you, it was not you that did it but God: Ye meant it for evil, but God sent it for good to preserve much people alive." So the Lord Jesus Christ ever recognized His sufferings and death as the plan of His Father's wisdom and love, and the chosen path of human redemption, and yet at the same time involving a no less degree of guilt on the part of those who wickedly ministered to His destruction. And so Peter declares in the beginning of Acts: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and, with wicked hands, have crucified and slain." And so the Lord declares himself to His earthly judge, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above," and yet with strange solemnity he adds, in the very spirit of the truth we have just stated, "Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

(9.) The sufferings of Joseph were not lost, but were the means in God's marvelous provi-

dence of saving his house and the whole world from death ; and so the type is transcendantly fulfilled in the glory and eternal issues of Christ's cross and shame, in the salvation of myriads of the redeemed from eternal death. It was this that enabled him on the threshold of that cross to cry, " Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." " The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." " And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Turning now to the application of all this to our own lives, we find in Joseph's sufferings a beautiful example of the spirit a Christian should exemplify under trial and affliction.

(1.) Like Joseph, our sufferings may often come from our own brethren. Many of the bitterest cups of our lives are put to our lips by the hands of those we love. When men attempt to polish a diamond, they either use another diamond or diamond dust, and so God has to purify us by the hard attrition of our dearest friends, and often our fellow Christians. Shall

we not, like Joseph, see His hand above their's, and take our lesson and hold our victory.

(2.) Like Joseph, we must also expect to be tried, misunderstood, hated, persecuted and wronged by the world. We should not expect less than our Master, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you." The secret of victory lies in the spirit of integrity and an unfailing confidence in God as one that is mightier than the world, and that will "bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noonday." "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls unto Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

(3.) Like Joseph's, our sufferings will often come to us through the grossest injustice on the part of men, involving loss, and even shameful reproach. The verdicts of public opinion and human authority are not always equitable, and many of God's dearest children have lived long under the ban of the severest injustice. This seems at first to human nature very hard to bear, and yet the apostle has said it is better

to suffer for well doing than for ill doing. "If when you do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable unto God. For hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps. Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again : when he suffered he threatened not ; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."

(4.) Like Joseph's, our sufferings may be aggravated and prolonged by the neglect and ingratitude of others, and even those whom we have most kindly befriended. The fellow prisoner whose release Joseph predicted, forgot him the moment he returned to his place and escaped his own misery, and left Joseph languishing in his neglected prison for years, when one word would have set him free. So our hearts will often ache at the inhumanity of men and the ingratitude of friends. Oftentimes we shall find our best services unappreciated and unrequited, and shall even be cruelly stung by those we have benefited or even saved. How much suffering there is even among God's chil-

dren which one word would avert, or the smallest sacrifice would prevent. But we must learn to endure and to wait, to render every ministry unto God, rather than to men, and accept our recompense not from human gratitude, but from our Master's righteous hand. How exquisite the answer of the great Christian soldier who, when parched with thirst after a bloody battle, was handed a cup of water by his attendant, and as he was about to hold it to his famished lips, he saw the hungry eyes of a wounded enemy looking at the water. Hastening to his side he handed him the cup, but the man instead of taking it made a sudden feint, and then by a quick movement tried to strike his noble benefactor with a death wound in return for his love. The brave officer sprang back and saved his life, but his attendant, with fierce indignation raised his sword and was about to bury it in the body of the miscreant. But the good man held him back, took his sword from his hand, disarmed the wounded enemy, and then handing the cup of water to his attendant,

quietly added: "Give it to him all the same." So let us love and bless.

(5.) The hardest ingredient in suffering is often time. A short, sharp pang is easily borne, but when a sorrow drags its weary weight through long monotonous years, and day after day returns with the same dull routine of hopeless agony, the heart loses its spring, and without the grace of God is sure to sink into the very sullenness of despair. Joseph's was a long trial, and God often has to burn His lessons into the depths of our being by the fires of protracted pain. "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," but He knows how long, and like a true goldsmith He stops the fires the moment He sees His image in the glowing metal. "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing!" "The God of all grace who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you; to Him be glory forever and ever, amen.

(6.) Like Joseph, let us meet our sufferings in a spirit of courageous cheerfulness and make the best of them. Joseph might have given up and said, "There is no use trying; everything is against me," as many a young man is tempted in adversity to do. But Joseph went into Potiphar's kitchen, not to repine and fret, but to be bright and useful and do his very best; and he so succeeded that before long he had the highest place in the household. And then, when the scene was changed from the kitchen to the prison, Joseph again, instead of giving up in sullen despair, and feeling that there was no use trying, resolved to make the best of this position, and so succeeded that ere long he was chief of the prisoners. Wherever he found himself he did his best, and having succeeded in a pantry and a prison he was ready for a palace and a throne. The man who cannot succeed in a trying position is not fit for an easier one. This lesson of Joseph's life takes hold, as no other in the Scriptures, of the practical questions that meet every man, and especially every young man, in the battle of life.

(7.) Like Joseph, we shall find it indispensable in the time of trouble to retain our integrity as a jewel above all price, and keep the conscience so pure that by well doing we shall be able to silence the ignorance of foolish men and give the devil no place for his assaults upon our faith. Joseph's heart would surely have been crushed, if, in the dark hour he had been compelled to say like his brothers afterwards, "I have been verily guilty, therefore this distress has come upon me." If we have been guilty in anything let it be quickly rectified, and it shall be forgiven, and then, with a pure conscience and a true heart, we can stand against all the storms of trial.

(8.) The support of Joseph in his trial was the confidence and consciousness of the Divine presence and the constant assurance which sprang from his early faith that God's hand was overruling all his life. There can be no doubt that in these dark hours his early dreams ever shone like a pole star of hope upon the midnight sky, and "for the joy set before him, He endured the cross and despised the shame."

We must hold fast to our faith and hope, or we cannot overcome the billows of sorrow. We must ever recognise the hand of infinite love in all our trials, and never for any instant listen to the devil's whisper, "The Lord has brought us hither that he might destroy us." This was the cowardly cry of a wicked king, but faith's answer ever is "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble: therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed and the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea." "The Lord God is with me, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." We may not see now the outcome of the beautiful plan which God is hiding in the shadow of His hand; it yet may be long concealed; but faith may be sure that He is sitting on the throne calmly waiting the hour when with adoring rapture we shall say, "All things have worked together for good."

(9.) Like Joseph, let us be more careful to learn all the lessons in the school of sorrow, than we are anxious for the hour of deliverance. There is a "need be" for every lesson, and

when we are ready, our deliverance will surely come, and we shall find that we could not have stood in our place of higher service without the very things that were taught us in the ordeal. God is educating us for the future, for higher service and nobler blessings; and if we have the qualities that fit us for a throne, all earth and hell cannot keep us from it when God's time has come. We cannot see it now, but shall surely find in God's "afterwards" the benefits and the necessity of the discipline which His patient love has held us to so strictly, and yet so wisely, in the experience of life.

SECTION IV.—*Joseph's Exaltation.*

The startling suddenness and transcendent greatness of the change which passed over Joseph's life in a few hours, seems almost too romantic to be true, but such transitions are not so sudden as they seem. Joseph had been quietly prepared for all this through the preceding years, and had learned his lessons so well that the mere outward circumstances of

his promotion were much less to him than they seemed to others. He recognized in his new position simply a divine call to new service, a situation requiring new duties and divine support, and proceeded to fulfill his new responsibilities with the same simple fidelity as he had shown in his humbler positions. While virtually the ruler of Egypt and the entire world, he used his high trust as a place of service, and went throughout the whole land of Egypt with the same painstaking care as one of his humblest subordinates. The change that came to Joseph was sudden and complete. His prison was exchange for a palace; his shame for the highest honor ; his position of degradation for one of authority and prominence, and his lonely suffering life for a happy home and the fellowship of a beloved and noble wife and family ; while as the years rolled on all that was lost was restored, the broken ties of home were healed, his dear father and fond brother were given back to his arms, and the very brothers that had betrayed him were reconciled to his affections and made to see

the sin and folly of their crime in a manner so wonderful and delightful that it took out of the past every bitter memory and painful sting, and turned the saddest trials he had known into the sweetest blessings of his life and others. And the scene closes with that which to him was the highest of all enjoyments, the opportunity of returning good for evil, ministering to the happiness of those he loved, cherishing and nourishing his father's house and his brethren with all the riches of his glory, and seeing them and the entire world blessed and even saved through the ministry of his suffering life. Surely this was, indeed, a transformation of suffering into glory and blessing. All this was the type of Christ's exaltation, and the pledge of our reward.

(1.) It foreshadows the exaltation of Jesus, after the shame and suffering of the cross, to the resurrection life and heavenly glory upon which he entered.

(2.) The relation of Joseph to Pharoah suggests the mediatorial office of Jesus Christ with the Father, administering as he does the govern-



ment of the universe, and having all things delivered into His hands. Pharoah answered every petition that came to him with the message, "Go to Joseph!" and so we have access unto the Father through Him, and receive the riches of grace and the blessings which we need and claim. All the treasures of Egypt were in Joseph's hands ; all the store, which saved and fed the famishing people, was given out at his orders ; and so "it hath pleased the Father that in Christ should all fulness dwell," "and of His fulness have we received grace for grace."

(3.) Joseph was virtually ruler over the land of Egypt and the entire world, and so Christ has been invested with like power in heaven and in earth. He is established "far above all might and dominion, and every name that is named, both in this world and that which is to come, and is head over all things to the church." Let us ever remember, when we look at the forces around us and our bitter trials, that

"He everywhere hath sway,
And all things serve His might;
His every act pure blessing is,
His path unsullied light."

(4.) The marriage of Joseph, after his exaltation, has been applied by some interpreters to the gathering of Christ's church to Himself in the heavenly places. It was not during His life of shame and suffering, but after His ascension, that He established the church, and her true place with Him—even in the present dispensation—the place where she should ever recognize herself as sitting, is by His side in glory. This also is part of His glory, and is to be His eternal joy, the church of His love and the partner of His nature and His throne.

(5.) The years of plenty, and then the years of famine which followed them, seem to foreshadow: the first, the dispensation of grace which is now proceeding; and the second, the time of tribulation which is coming upon the earth before the end, out of which He "shall gather His people to meet Him in the air." It was during this time of famine that Joseph's brethren came to him and were reconciled. And so it shall be during the days of tribulation that Christ's brethren after the flesh, the Jews shall recognize Him, repent of their sins, and

be restored to His friendship and blessing, and afterwards share with Him in their own separate national life, as in Egypt of old, the blessing of His millennial kingdom. This is to be one of the crowning glories of the once rejected Nazarene that "they shall look upon Him they have pierced, and shall mourn," and shall be reconciled to the Messiah that they delivered to the Gentiles, and that God has made such a blessing to the Gentiles, as He made Joseph of old. This whole story, therefore, is the picture-in some degree at least, of the millennial times, and, no doubt, the fulfillment will bring out many resemblances and correspondences which we cannot now foresee.

The story of Joseph is not only a picture of Christ's exaltation, but is to us the pledge that the trials we endure for Christ shall "work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." In a little while the trials of the present will be exchanged for glories and enjoyments which will make us ashamed that we ever murmured or shrank in the brief ordeal, which was only God's beneficent school

to educate us for our kingdom. This is the chief lesson of Joseph's life, to teach us the outcome of sorrow, innocently, bravely, and triumphantly endured, according to the will of God. It cannot harm us, and the recompense is beyond our highest thought. An ancient monarch found on ascending to the throne from which a usurper had long excluded him, that one of his faithful adherents was lying in a prison because he had dared to dispute the tyrant's claim, and had been true to his exiled master through years of bondage. The victorious king commanded the noble captain to be brought into his presence and the chains struck from his limbs. He then ordered an attendant to weigh them in his sight and then bring from the palace treasures bag after bag of gold, and weigh them on the same scales. Then turning to his faithful friend, he said : " You have worn these chains for me, now you shall have their weight in gold ; you have languished in a prison for me, now you shall have a palace, and all your sufferings shall be rewarded by their exact equivalent in riches and honor." And so

for us “it is a faithful saying, if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer, we shall also reign.”

SECTION V.—*The Grace displayed in Joseph's Life and Character.*

Higher far than all his glory, is the glorious fact that he used it only for others. The crown of Joseph's character, like his greater Antitype, is love. He stands ever as the highest type of Jesus, our suffering, forgiving brother, and our gracious and benignant Lord.

(1.) We see the beneficence of Joseph's spirit in his kindness, even in his humiliation, to those about him. He ministered to his suffering fellow prisoners. And so Christ went about continually doing good, and all who are like Christ will live to use every station as an opportunity of service, and leave behind them even in the vilest and meanest place, only memorials of blessing.

(2.) We see, next, his graciousness in the use he made of his exalted power. Not for himself did he hold the sceptre of Egypt, but for the

people he served and saved. The abundance that came to his care was simply regarded as a trust for others, and husbanded for the time of their need. So Christ has been exalted to the right hand of power, not for His own selfish magnificence and enjoyment, but that He might be a Prince and a Saviour. So he has received all the fulness of the Father that He might give it to the race for which He died. His heavenly life is as unselfish as His earthly, and could we behold Him now, it would still be the ministering priest, the girded servant, the gracious and ever-willing benefactor of all who need His help and care. He is not an Oriental despot, but a loving, toiling, ever accessible friend; never perplexed, never overwhelmed with any difficult situation, never preoccupied, but ever ready with open ear and heart and hand to hear our cry and help our need. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Seeing that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. For we have not an

high priest that cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Like our exalted and beneficent Master, so must we also use our place of privilege and blessing for service and for others. We are trustees and stewards of the manifold grace of God, and the more fully we receive, the more fully we must learn that "It is more blessed to give than to receive," and that the very condition of keeping our blessing is that we shall "be a blessing." A selfish Christian is as inconsistent and impossible as a selfish Christ. We, too, are come to our kingdom for such a time as this. Years of famine are coming to the souls around us; in a little while they shall be perishing for eternal bread; they need our prayers, our help; and even although they may not know it now as we do, yet the day is coming when they shall reap the blessings of our faith and our foresight. Let us be true to our trust, and thus worthy to stand with Joseph and his greater Master, as the dispensers of God's blessings to a dying world.

(3.) The pre-eminent picture of Christ's heart is seen in Joseph's relation to his brethren, and his wise, and yet tender, forgiving love. In the wronged and injured brother we see the Saviour, and his rejection by those for whom he died. In the long years of indifference and forgetfulness that followed, we behold a picture of the patience that waits while men go on in callousness and hardness of heart. In the troubles that at last overtook them and brought them unconsciously to their injured brother for help, we see how God at length compels the obdurate heart by bitter trials to come to Him, even though it may not yet know Him. In the position of those brethren at the feet of Joseph, unknowing, yet not unknown, we see the sinner whom Christ is drawing to Himself, but who yet does not even know that He is drawing, but is just driving on in some blind course of desperate heedlessness. In the wise and even stern discipline through which Joseph gradually brought them to reflection and the recollection of their sin, and awakened in their breasts the slumbering voice of conscience, we see the

exquisite process through which the Holy Ghost convicts the hardened heart of the sinner, and lets its own memories and convictions gently prepare it to receive His mercy. In the deep tenderness that Joseph held in check through all this long ordeal, we see the love that Christ often hides under His sternest discipline and longs to pour out upon our breast when we are ready to receive it.

At length the hour of reconciliation comes; and as in our case, so it begins with Joseph, and not with the guilty brothers. God is the first to meet us in reconciliation, and it is His love that awakens our trust, and His grace that quickens our heart into grace. How fully Joseph forgives; how tenderly ~~he~~ meets the men that had so pitilessly sacrificed him; how generously he insists that they shall forget and forgive themselves; how he tries to banish every painful memory; how he receives them to his very heart and home, and feasts with them in the absence of all other guests; and how royally he provides for them and theirs, sharing with them his wealth and glory, and sending

for them to dwell with him amid the abundance of the land and in its fairest region.

All this is infinitely more realized in the love of Jesus, who has been more cruelly wronged. He draws with wiser, tenderer influences of love and power. He it is who says "I will heal their backslidings; I will love them freely for mine anger is turned away." Not only does he forgive, but he forgets; not only does he save from wrath, but He receives us to His friendship, feasts us at His table, feeds us with His own very life, shares with us His riches and glory, and takes us to be with Him where He is in all the riches of His kingdom and inheritance.

As we have already suggested, this will receive a ~~literal~~ fulfillment bye and bye in the actual seed of Jacob, the literal brethren of Jesus, but it is also fulfilled in the forgiveness and reconciliation of every heart that has learned to know Him as a "friend that sticketh closer than a brother." Have we learned to know Him by this tender name and this exquisite type, and shall we realize with a sweetness unknown before, and reflect upon others, in our turn, like Him, the meaning of these lines?

194 EMBLEMS FROM THE STORY OF JOSEPH.

Yes, for me, for me He careth,
With a brother's tender care;
Yes, with me, with me He shareth
Every burden, every fear.

Yes, o'er me, o'er me He watcheth,
Ceaseless watcheth night and day:
Yes, e'en me, e'en me He snatcheth
From the perils of the way.

Yes, in me, in me He dwelleth—
I in Him, and He in me;
And my empty soul He filleth,
Here and through eternity.



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